



## Cameron accused by MPs of 'cronyism' over list **HONOURS FOR 'OLD BOYS' FURY**

By Peter Madeley

**A DUDLEY MP has led the criticism of former Prime Minister David Cameron, accusing him of 'cronyism' over the honours system.**

Mr Cameron was accused by Black Country MPs as undermining the honours system after a leaked list suggested he was rewarding supporters in his final act as PM.

The 48 suggestions in Mr Cameron's resignation honours list include some of the biggest names in the failed Remain campaign, as well as personal aides, Tory donors and his wife Samantha's personal stylist.

Dudley North representative Ian Austin said: "It is unbelievable. David Cameron is dishing out honours like sweets to his friends and flunkies. The only thing that surprises me is that he hasn't given one to Larry, the Downing Street cat."

Labour's deputy leader Tom Watson, MP for West Bromwich East, said: "That Mr Cameron proposes to reward his friends network on such a huge scale will not only bring the honours system into disrepute, it will undermine the reputation of Theresa May."

### Proof

"It's cronyism, pure and simple and proof the Tories will always put their own interests before those of the country."

The honours list features South Staffordshire MP Gavin Williamson, who served as Mr Cameron's parliamentary private secretary for three years before marshalling Theresa May's rise to Number 10. He is now the Government's Chief Whip and has been put forward for a CBE. He declined to comment.

Tory party chairman Patrick McLoughlin, the former Staffordshire miner who was Chief Whip and then Transport Secretary under Mr Cameron, has been proposed for a knighthood.

The list is top heavy with Remain campaigners, including former Chancellor George Osborne, Philip Hammond, Michael Fallon, David Lidington, and campaign leader Will Straw.

Mr Austin added: "The honours are supposed to be for those who have done a fantastic service to their country, not his old mates. I want to see people from the Black Country honoured. This list is undermining confidence in the whole system."

The list has also prompted anger from Tories in the Leave campaign.

Staunch Eurosceptic Sir Bill Cash, the MP for Stone, said: "I would describe it as a roll of despair. It looks to me like this is David Cameron's final gesture of defiance."

## CASTLE HORROR SCREENING JUST THE TICKET



Tickets are selling fast for the open air cinema showing of *Bride of Frankenstein* this weekend. Photo credit: Greg Milner

MORE than 100 people are expected to visit Dudley Castle this weekend when it is transformed into an open air cinema.

Horror film the *Bride of Frankenstein*, starring Boris Karloff, will be screened on Saturday night as part of Dudley Castle After Dark, with tickets are selling fast.

The 1935 classic was directed by Dudley-born James Whale.

The event is being run in partnership with Flatpack Projects and will include a series of spooky surprises. Visitors can take along their own chair and blanket. It is part of Flatpack's

Black Country Pop-up Film Tour, running in conjunction with Creative Black Country's Imagine That! summer season.

Abbe Elliston, operations manager for Flatpack Projects, said: "Tickets are selling really well. We will be expecting that there will be in excess of 100 people."

Gates open at 8pm but the main film will be screened at 9.30 following a mixture of warm-up showings. It is rated PG and tickets are available for £10, with concessions £8. There will also be a DJ, food and bar.

"There is no strict rule that people have

to come in costume - if they do then that's great, but otherwise they are welcome to come casual," said Abbe.

For more information go to [www.flatpack-festival.org.uk](http://www.flatpack-festival.org.uk)

James Whale worked as a cobbler and panel beater in Dudley before joining the Army in the First World War.

When he returned to the UK he made a name for himself. He gained a reputation in classic horror films such as *Frankenstein*, followed by *The Invisible Man* and *Bride of Frankenstein*.

### RED TAPE

## Parades backed by commissioner

WEST Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson has said he will 'not let bureaucracy get in the way' of Remembrance Sunday parades.

A change in police policy means closing roads for the parades to honour fallen soldiers is now the responsibility of organisers - who face costly bills for professional traffic management contractors.

But Mr Jamieson has said he will do whatever he can to make sure that the parades will go ahead.

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### FINANCE

## Council tax could rise for worse-off

LOW-INCOME households in Dudley could be facing a five per cent rise on their council tax bills.

Dudley Council is proposing to make changes to its council tax reduction scheme. Currently, all working age Dudley households eligible for the reduction have to pay at least 20 per cent of the council tax of their property.

Bosses are proposing to increase that to 22 or 25 per cent, but could keep the scheme as it is. Have a say at [www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/your-council](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/your-council)

### APPEAL

## Threat with knife as woman mugged

A MUGGER stole cash from a woman's wallet after pushing her to the ground and claiming he had a knife.

The 33-year-old woman was approached from behind as she walked down Meddins Lane, Kinver, towards Potters Cross at around 6.45pm on Sunday. The victim felt an object in the back of her neck and was pushed to the ground.

A man with a local accent threatened the woman and demanded her wallet, telling her he had a knife. He stole cash and threw the wallet on the ground before 'shuffling' up Meddins Lane towards Kinver Edge.

Call police on 101 with information.

### INSIDE:

## SOCCER LEGEND FILM AMBITION



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Star Reader Travel has been part of the weeklies' sister newspaper the Express & Star for more than 40 years, working with specialist companies offering passengers quality trips at affordable prices.

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weekend breaks to London, river cruises and trips to Europe by air, coach or Eurostar. There are also long haul packages to far away destinations, frequently escorted by experienced tour managers, as well as once-in-a-lifetime experience trips.

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# Bosses wary over Metro line extension project

TRANSPORT bosses have said caution should be reserved on a proposed extension of the Midland Metro line from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill until funding for the project is secured.

The extension to the line to take the Metro into Dudley has long been mooted but experts say any work is still a long way off.

A business case is currently being prepared on the scheme, on which a final decision is also likely to be on hold until the new combined authority is up and running.

Council bosses in Sandwell also warned the recent changes at the top of the Government could also have an impact.

Regeneration boss Councillor Paul Moore said: "I think it is right to reserve some caution at the moment.

"If the scheme is ever going to happen now is the time to do it, but (Chancellor) Phillip Hammond, the Treasury team and and Theresa May have got to honour the commitment they made."

## Promise

Council leader Steve Eling said: "We are pressing for this to happen. There is a commitment from us. This has been hanging around for 20 years and there has been no progress whatsoever.

"It seems to be nearing a reality with the promise of cash from the combined authority but if they promise us money it's not in the bank yet.

"Where we are at the moment is the plans are being drawn up but there is a substantial amount of work to be done before we see any physical work."

It is hoped the Metro line will be extended from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill over the next decade. Despite the concerns over the scheme, it has been given encouragement with the backing of plans to extend the line in Wolverhampton.

Permission has been granted by the Government to begin work on the £18 million city centre extension, with completion also scheduled for 2019. The route will take trams along Pipers Row, stopping outside the bus station before continuing to the railway station which will also be redeveloped in the Wolverhampton Interchange Project.

## Gardeners hope for blooming success



Margaret Bytheway, left, and Jenny Cadwallader-Hunt get ready to judge the It's Your Neighbourhood Awards

GARDENERS in Amblecote are rooting for gold after judges descended on the village for the It's your Neighbourhood Award - part of Amblecote in Bloom venture.

Dozens of residents and businesses have taken part in the competition, hanging baskets from buildings and planting colourful flowers.

Contestants hope to go one better this time round after Amblecote won silver in 2015.

Councillor Christine Perks,

Netherton, for Woodside & St Andrews Ward, said: "We won't find out how well we have done until September 15 when an awards ceremony will be held in Aldridge.

"It is a community event and one that aims to make the village look nice. It is like Britain in Bloom but we are not in competition with other villages and towns.

"Shopkeepers and traders are delighted with it taking place, it makes the village look better.

Participants have sought for cre-

ative ways to display plants and flowers. Among the entrants taking part is bicycle company Two Wheels, located on Brettell Lane, where they have used a Mary Poppins style bike with a basket on the front to hold flowers.

Dementia Gateway Services was another entry into the competition.

They had hung six baskets outside the shop front and spruced up the back garden using unique items as makeshift pots, such as a watering can and a small bath sink.

# Thug jailed for attacking stranger in town centre

A THUG has been locked up for a year after attacking a stranger in Dudley town centre packed with shoppers.

Gavin Johnson - who was with two 17-year-old youths - demanded money after confronting the victim near the junction of Stone and Tower Streets, shortly after the young man got off a bus.

The 25-year-old defendant later claimed: "He got a bit anxious towards me and then spat in my face. The natural reaction to that is to hit him and that is what I did."

An elderly woman shopper was sent flying as Johnson frogmarched the other man round a corner where he was knocked to the ground, punched and kicked but not seriously injured, said Mr Andrew Wallace, prosecuting at Wolverhampton Crown Court.

The two youths became involved as the victim had two mobile phones taken from his pockets during the fracas on September 11. A CCTV operator alerted police and the trio were detained close to the scene. A fourth culprit escaped and has not been traced.

Johnson from Central Drive, Lower Gornal admitted assault and was sent to prison for 12 months by Judge John Wait who said: "This was carried out in broad daylight, in the centre of a town in front of shoppers without regard for those around you."

The two teenagers, who both admitted robbery, were remanded on bail and will be sentenced at the youth court at a later date.

# Woman up on roof for 17 hours

A WOMAN came down from the roof of a car park in Halesowen following an incident which lasted around 17 hours.

Pool Road was shut off at both ends from around 8am last Thursday while officers work to resolve the incident.

Access was blocked at both Queens Way and Birmingham Street at the ends of the road which is close to Halesowen Leisure Centre. She came down at around 1.30am on Friday.

West Midlands Police spokesman Lee Page said the woman was detained under the Mental Health Act.

The force thanked people for their patience after some were unable to retrieve their vehicles from the car park.

He added: "Their patience allowed for this to be resolved safely and the officers at the scene are grateful for that."

# Adult panto set to be Whitty affair

AN adult pantomime is coming to Brierley Hill Civic Hall in the new year.

The Market Theatre Company is to give performances of Dick Whitty for an over-16s audience on January 25 and 26 at 7.30pm.

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# Pledge over returning church to past glory

A LANDMARK Dudley church closed for the last 14 years will reopen this month as campaigners finally secured the lease promising to return it to its former glory.

The St John's Preservation Group will become tenants of the historic Kates Hill church and can now start the task of restoring the building.

They say it will be used for six Anglican services a year, with plans of creating a visitor centre, cafe, gift shop and costumed guided tours.

The 2.5 acres of graveyard has also been developed to double as a nature reserve, with additional land at the side to be extended to create trails, pools and a community orchard.

Group chairman Deb Brownlee said: "Our task now is not just to make the building physically usable but also make it so well used and loved that it will never fall into danger again."

The lease was completed on July 27 – exactly 176 years to the day when the church was opened in 1840.

The public are invited to the church for a ceremonial key handover by the Archdeacon of Dudley at 3pm on August 17. The group aims to allow immediate public access and intends to let supporters see the church in its raw state by creating a walk through.

The group had difficulty in obtaining insurance for the building, and the final cost for cover was £9,500. They are currently asking for donations to help build their funds up again. Call 07871195042 or email [savestjohnschurch@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:savestjohnschurch@hotmail.co.uk)

# £1.4m council homes complete

A £1.4 million pound revamp of a former care home to create 14 new council homes is complete.

Work to convert and refurbish the former Arcal Lodge care home in Sedgley began last summer.

The development is made up of eight bungalows, three two-bed and three one-bed flats.

The completed scheme has been handed over to the council and residents are set to move in to the newly renamed Arcal Lodge Mews.

The scheme has been funded through a £245,000 grant from the government's Homes and Communities Agency, with the remaining funds coming from the council's Housing Revenue Account and Right to Buy receipts.

# Support group stages fun day

A SUPPORT group is holding a community fun day in Dudley this month.

The event at Summit House Support's base at Brindley House, North Street, is being held on August 19 from 11am to 4pm.

# Robot team powers into TV final



Team Carbide with their robot

A DUDLEY team wowed the crowds as a cult show returned to the small screen for the first time in more than a decade.

Robot Wars is back on TV on a Sunday night. The opening show in the series was the first in 12 years.

Teams design fighting robots weighing more than 100kg who battle it out for supremacy in a purpose-built arena.

Team Carbide – complete with a vicious blade that spins at up to 2,300rpm – was put together by David Moulds, a robotics engineer for

Cadburys, Sam Smith, an aerospace engineer for Rolls Royce, and former Dudley College student Sheryl Prior.

After a stuttering start, the trio's robot wreaked havoc, decimating opponents and sending fragments of their foes flying into the air.

## Stronger

The trio progressed through to the grand final which will air later this year. Team Carbide posted on Twitter afterwards: "Hope you guys liked the show as much as we did! Thanks #RobotWars see you in the final!"

Fans certainly showed their support for the returning show, with Robot Wars powering to a stronger performance in the ratings than the last episode of Top Gear.

The rebooted series was broadcast in the 8pm Sunday slot vacated by the motoring show.

An average of two million viewers watched Robot Wars, which was a fixture on the BBC from 1998 to 2003.

Presented by comedian Dara O'Brian and Angela Scanlon, Robot Wars achieved a 10 per cent share of the available viewing audience.

# Police decision puts parades in jeopardy

**DUDLEY'S Remembrance Day parade is at risk after West Midlands Police admitted it would no longer provide officers for traffic management duties.**

The force's move has been labelled 'a disgrace' and 'disgusting' by Royal British Legion leaders across the Black Country.

A top officer has confirmed a change of policy, which means closing roads for the parades to honour fallen soldiers is now the responsibility of organisers.

However, some Black Country British Legion branches have claimed they will not be able afford the cash required to hire a professional traffic management contractor. This could put some events at risk – including Dudley's.

A letter to Walsall North MP David Winnick, from Walsall Chief Superintendent Joanne Clews states that at a meeting last month, between police and Walsall branches, members were told that police 'would not as in previous years be able to resource the physical staffing of the road closures'.

Malcolm Davis, chairman of the Dudley branch of the Royal British Legion, said it was 'an absolute disgrace' that branches may have to fund their own traffic management schemes if nothing is done. He said: "We have to host these parades, this is our way of commemorating those who gave their today for our tomorrow."

## Disgrace

"I highly doubt we would be able to go ahead with our parade if we had to pay for our own traffic enforcement. If we can't go ahead with it, it would be an absolute disgrace, I hope somebody can step in to help."

Cradley chairman Norman Catton said the town's parade would carry on regardless, but he was outraged at the police's decision.

Halesowen British Legion's welfare officer Ray Clift said he, too, was disappointed by the police's decision, but said the town's parade would go ahead as usual thanks to the support from volunteers.

Mr Clift said: "I'm angry about this and I think the police have got their priorities wrong."

West Midlands Police spokesman Joanne Hunt said the force was 'absolutely committed' to supporting parades and would be sending volunteers to attend, but closing roads was the responsibility of event organisers.



Residents, staff and stakeholders holding a cake to mark the first anniversary of Saltbrook Place in Lye

# Scheme marks its first birthday

AN award-winning supported housing scheme for vulnerable adults and the homeless in Dudley has celebrated its first anniversary.

Owned and managed by housing and care provider Midland Heart, Saltbrook Place in Lye plays a key role in preventing rough sleeping. The scheme is a partnership between Midland Heart, Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council and the Homes and Communities Agency and since opening has been at full occupancy, supporting 158 residents.

To mark its birthday customers and partners enjoyed a celebration event complete with birthday cake.

As well as structured support and accommodation, customers have access to an IT suite, training kitchens and allotments, as well as mainstream health services, specialist agencies and local colleges. The building houses extensive facilities for the wider neighbourhood, including meeting rooms and catering and exercise facilities.

For more, visit <http://www.midlandheart.org.uk/supporting-you/homeless/flagship-accommodation/>

## NEWS IN BRIEF

# New year start on road scheme

WORK on a £5m major road improvement scheme for Pensnett will begin in January, it has been announced.

The scheme, for Pensnett High Street, was launched by Dudley Council in September. It aims to reduce congestion, improve the safety of roads and pedestrian crossings and increase the reliability of bus services.

The scheme will see the road widened into two lanes in both directions and new traffic lights be installed around the site. Some businesses and residents will be relocated to make way for the revamped High Street.

# Trio of students build for future

STUDENTS are building their own futures on Stourbridge College's latest construction project.

Three carpentry apprentices, Mohammed Miah, 23, Kiran Noor, 19 and Ben Hubbins, 20, have been employed to help deliver the college's ambition of high quality training facilities for electrical, plumbing and carpentry trades.

All three are using the opportunity on site to further their training by working as apprentices alongside sub-contractor Bradley Cooper Carpentry and Joinery Ltd.

# 150 dwellings in new development

PLANS have been submitted for 150 homes near Stourbridge.

The plans which have been lodged with Dudley Council, show the new estate would be built either side of the River Stour in Wollaston.

The homes would be built on land close to where Wollaston Road meets High Street.

More detailed plans are expected to be sent to planners over the coming weeks. Members of the planning committee will then make a decision.

# Change of venue for councillor's surgery

WORDSLEY ward councillor Paul Brothwood is to move his monthly surgery from Wordsley Library to the community centre.

Each surgery will take place on the last Thursday of every month from 5.30-7pm.

Councillor Brothwood said: "If these times are not convenient I'm more than happy to arrange a home visit."

Contact him on 07791 498977 or email [cllr.paul.brothwood@dud-leymbc.co.uk](mailto:cllr.paul.brothwood@dud-leymbc.co.uk)

## Housing proposal

THREE homes could be built next to a pub in Netherton. The properties would be built on a strip of land next to the White Swan at the junction of Swan Street and Baptist End Road. Dudley Council planners are due to make a decision in the next few weeks.

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Before



After



## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



THERE was a time when old folk would jovially tell you that the great thing about being grandparents, rather than parents, was that "you can hand the kids back at the end of the day." Having observed a number of frazzled sixtysomethings in charge of under-10s in the school holidays, I bet some of them would be happy to pick the little blighters up at 8am and hand them back at 9am.

"TOOK ages to find your house, mate. Went the wrong way up the bypass, had to stop and ask the way three times. Miserable weather, innit? Who d'you fancy for the Cup, then? Went fishing yesterday down the canal, caught a nice roach. Just sign here for your package, pal." Amazon says its parcels may soon be delivered by drones.

TWENTY years ago, at the height of the BSE scare, the United States stopped importing British beef and lamb, to protect its people from mad-cow disease. It was announced this week that imports will resume next January. Here's the question. Over the past 20 years spent avoiding British meat, have the Americans become less mad or more mad?

HORRIBLE Hillary. Terrible Trump. How can it be that the popular vote to select Democrat and Republican US presidential candidates has produced two of the most unpopular people in the entire country?

NICK Clegg's wife, the dazzlingly exotic Miriam Gonzalez Durantez, seems surprised to have been served Hellmann's mayonnaise at a Downing Street function. I sympathise, chuck. You really can't beat Tesco Salad Cream, can you?



I AM not sure whether you can judge much in the first month after a referendum. Things may yet go belly-up. But so far the sky has not fallen in, the FTSE index is doing well, the pound has stabilised at a lower level and there is news of investment in Britain in everything from medical research to fast food and housebuilding. There is talk of free-trade agreements with Canada, Australia, China and India, and even warnings of a sudden spike in immigration as EU citizens rush to the honeypot and powerhouse that Brexit Britain may become.

A SYRIAN refugee family resettled on the Scottish island of Bute are deeply unhappy, claiming the place is full of old people who go there to die. I wonder if they die of the cooking? Bute is forever stuck in my mind as the place where, many years ago, I had the worst meal of my life. It was advertised on the menu as "mince". I assumed it would be served in a tasty, spicy sauce. Not a chance. It was a sloppy dollop of grey minced beef, boiled to extinction in salty water and served with a scowl.

**Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star**

# Centre owners to buy intu other half

MERRY Hill owner Intu says it aims to accelerate major revamp plans for the shopping centre following its £410 million deal to buy the half it didn't already own.

The group, which has outlined major redevelopments at its Lakeside and Watford shopping centres, hailed a 'strong set of results' for the first six months of the year, with rental income rising £12m to £219.4m.

Intu said buying the other half of the £890m Merry Hill site in June from Australian investment group QIC would enable it "to accelerate re-engineering the retail, catering and leisure mix to unlock the full potential of this centre".

A revaluation of the site following the deal showed it was worth £35m more than expected.

The company said: "We believe the

centre presents a significant opportunity to re-engineer and update the tenant mix."

"Encouraging large flagship formats and reducing the number of smaller units will make the centre more attractive to retailers and customers, and improve the rental tone."

Merry Hill is the fourth biggest of intu's UK shopping centres, with 213

stores and 1.67 million sq ft of space. As well as increasing the size of its biggest stores the group plans major improvements to the restaurant and leisure facilities at the centre.

Chief executive David Fischel said: "With over £500 million of cash and available facilities, we are well positioned to take opportunities when they arise, such as the acquisition of the other half of intu Merry Hill."

# Film on soccer legend not just Distant dream

By Judith Hawkins

**FOOTBALL legend Duncan Edwards is to be honoured in a film written and directed by a fan from his hometown.**

'Duncan Edwards - The Boy Who Had It All' is the working title of a short work by filmmaker Marcus Distant, from Dudley.

Edwards, who lived on the Priory Estate, was one of the famous 'Busby Babes' at Manchester United. He was only 21 when he died - one of eight players to lose their lives as a result of the Munich air disaster on February 6, 1958.

Regularly seeing the Edwards statue in Dudley, inspired Marcus to create a film on the local hero, and he has carried out meticulous research by looking through history books and biographies in order to gain an accurate picture of his life in the town.

He even has his own personal connection to the iconic footballer, as his uncle John Ball and other members of the family once had Edwards as a babysitter.

"Over the past year, I have researched Duncan's life in great detail and found him more and more inspiring at every step. It's hard to imagine that a boy so talented could come from such an unassuming place," he said.

However before Marcus' vision to create an inspiring film can become reality, he needs to raise around £5,000 to get it into production.

Marcus studied drama and theatre performance at the University of Wolverhampton, before moving into screen writing. He points out there have been surprisingly few films about Edwards.

Instead of focusing on the tragic end to Edwards' life, Marcus has turned his attention to the footballer's childhood growing up in Dudley, and plans to use special effects to create a flashback sequence.

He has assembled a skilled production team, and given that the script is only 15 pages long they hope that once the funding is secured they can get the film made relatively quickly.

The project has been given the consent of Edwards' family and Dudley Council, who will allow Marcus and his team to film at the town museum's Duncan Edwards exhibit.

The plan is to upload the completed film, which should be between 10 to 13 minutes long, to YouTube so it is available to the public. They will also enter it into competitions, with the ultimate aim of developing it into a feature film.



The film team of Connor Ashmore, Hayden Hill, Marcus Distant, Gary Rogers, Kev McDonagh, Afonso

## Camra delight as real ale festival saved

THE annual Dudley Winter Ales Fair has been saved after new organisers came forward to take charge of its running. It had been cancelled after the Dudley and South Staffordshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale could not find someone to take over as festival organiser.

At an emergency meeting in the Lamp Tavern, Dudley, social secretary Jacqui Edwards was voted in to the post. She will be assisted by Simon Hanson, a member of neighbouring Stourbridge and Halesowen Camra.

The branch had invited members from other West Midlands branches to the meeting in an

effort to save the three-day festival, which will now go ahead from November 24-26 in Dudley Town Hall.

Camra's regional director Gary Timmins, who had been prepared to take on the festival organiser post if no one else had come forward, said he was delighted it had been saved.

Branch chairman Eyan Hunt said it would have been very sad to lose the festival, but added all other key roles in the team needed for the festival, including treasurer, had been filled.

Mrs Edwards, of Woodsetton, said more members would still need to get involved.

# Conversion of care home earmarked for approval

A CONTROVERSIAL application to convert a former care home into bed-sit-style accommodation is in line for approval, despite police warning it could become a 'crime magnet'.

West Midlands Police was consulted on the plans for the vacant Beech Tree House Care Home on Himley Road, Dudley, being turned into a 22-bed house for multiple occupants.

In their response, crime prevention design adviser Pc Simon Barrett said: "Experience tells us that developments of this type tend to become crime hot spots or crime magnets."

"I have great concerns about this type of development and the increasing number of applications being approved, as have my colleagues who work on the Neighbourhood Beat Team areas as they can create a huge drain on ever-decreasing police resources."

The police's comments are referred to in the report by planning officers which will be presented to members of Dudley's development control committee before they make their decision next Tuesday.

The report states: "Issues raised by West Midlands Police are not material planning considerations and make assumptions with regards to the future occupiers of the property which are not for assessment or consideration within the planning process."

Objections have been received from police and Himley Road residents in relation to parking.

A revised plan with a 16-space car park has been submitted.

## Annual trek gets sponsorship deal

A NEW sponsorship deal has been agreed, enabling more people to take part in the annual Bert Bissell charity expedition up Ben Nevis.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin and Mayor Councillor Mohammed Hanif will join more than 20 fundraisers in taking on Britain's highest mountain on August 11.

National Express has agreed to sponsor the trek, in memory of Dudley mountaineer, peace campaigner and charity fundraiser Mr Bissell.

The firm has put on a coach to travel after a record number of local people signed up to try to beat the £9,000 raised last year.

Mr Austin said: "I'm delighted that the number taking part and making a donation is growing every year."

## Free public admission to 23rd flower show

SEDGLEY and District Community Association's Gardening Club's 23rd flower and vegetable show takes place on August 20.

Public entry is free from 12.30pm following the judging at the community centre, off Ladies Walk.

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# Sergeant in Army was drug racket middleman

AN Army staff sergeant involved in a lucrative cocaine dealing operation will potentially keep his job after being ordered to carry out unpaid work.

Andrew Barnard, of Careless Green, Wollescote, who has served in Iraq and Afghanistan during a 17-year career, acted as a middleman, putting dealer Kenneth Bain in touch with 'customers', Birmingham Crown Court heard.

Ms Alison Scott-Jones, prosecuting, said: "There were significant amounts of traffic between both men and significant others."

Recorder Benjamin Nicholls decided on a community order for Barnard, aged 34, with 90 hours of unpaid work. A more severe sentence could have ended his army career.

Ms Jabeen Akhtar, defending Barnard, said he had only put users in touch with Bain, had limited involvement and had not benefited financially. But police questioned whether he could afford 'luxury vehicles' found at his home on his army salary alone.

Police had been monitoring king-pin Bain, 31. A search on his home in Crownoaks Drive, Wordsley, in December 2014, found a 27-gram block of cocaine, 11.5 grams of cannabis, a cutting agent and weighing scales.

Police said electrical engineer Bain was living a 'lavish lifestyle'. He admitted possession of a class A drug with intent, being concerned in the supply of a class A drug and possession of a class B drug. He was given two-years, suspended for two years, and 240 hours of unpaid work.

# Park bid hit by funding blow

PLANS to revamp a popular park have suffered a blow after a funding application was turned down.

Council bosses were hopeful cash from the Heritage Lottery Fund would help pay for improvements at Stevens Park in Quarry Bank. However, they have been informed their bid for funding was rejected.

The council initially asked for £138,000 which, if successful, would have been followed by a further £1.4m request.

Chiefs plan to see where they went wrong and re-submit the bid.

Councillor David Sparks, who is chairman of the Friends of Stevens Park, said the cash would be used to renovate the park's famous White House building.

# Eletrical firm's boost to school

AN electrical firm has given a Stourbridge primary school a boost by providing outdoor equipment. Ballard Electricians donated £200 to Gig Mill Primary School, on the Broadway, during its annual summer fair.

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. "Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people

money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding

area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people



# Funding bid lodged for church repairs



St Thomas's Church, Stourbridge

A FUNDING bid has been launched to allow an historic Stourbridge church to undergo much-needed repairs.

Members of St Thomas's Church have submitted an application for almost £150,000 to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The cash would be used to make urgent repairs to the stonework at the Market Street church. It would allow for a toilet to be installed at the Grade I-listed building as well as a permanent ramped access and part-glazed porch door in a bid to make the

church more accessible to people with disabilities.

Church leaders have already been granted £12,400 in Heritage Lottery funding which has allowed them to develop their plans for the church.

They are keen to develop the church, which dates to the early 18th century, as a place of historical interest, which would see the building become open for tours to community groups and schools. The church has recently opened to visitors from 9.30am to 5pm Tuesday to Sunday. A funding bid for £149,000 has been

submitted, which would take church leaders closer to the overall target of £236,000. They are also expected to receive a £10,000 grant from the National Churches Trust and have been awarded another £3,000 from the All-churches Trust.

Stourbridge councillor Nicolas Barlow said he was hopeful the bid for funding was successful. He said: "It will be a real coup as it is a very important part of Stourbridge. It has been there for so many years and has always been a focal part of the town centre."

# Call to make ruins a Pokemon No Go zone

**COUNCIL chiefs hope to pull the plug on Pokemon Go players using a hotspot site in Dudley following complaints from residents.**

People of all ages have been descending on Priory Ruins to play the game.

The site is a designated PokeStop – an area where players congregate to collect items needed to progress in the game.

However, council bosses said they have come under 'intense pressure' from residents who have complained about noise and damage to the iconic site caused by players.

Cabinet member Hilary Bills confirmed the authority has now 'reluctantly' approached Pokemon Go's developers Niantic Labs asking for the site to be removed from the game.

Residents have accused players of parking on double yellow lines, playing music late at night and of causing damage to the ruins.

Councillor Hilary Bills, cabinet member for environmental services, said: "Over the past week we have been actively promoting the Pokemon Go game at all levels of the council after recognising the enormous potential to see more people visiting our towns, parks and other tourist attractions.

## Protect

"However, under intense pressure from local residents and Priory Park user groups we have reluctantly asked Niantic Labs to consider removing the Pokemon stops, which attract large groups of people in a single place, from the Priory Park ruins to protect them amid growing concerns.

"Complaints included incidents of damage to these Grade II listed ancient monument as well as parking issues and general noise and disturbance for nearby residents throughout the night, which we had to take into consideration.

"There are lots more opportunities for Pokemon hunting elsewhere in the borough at our libraries, other parks and countryside open spaces and town centres and we very much welcome people to explore these areas."

One of the roads affected is Paganel Drive. Police have carried out patrols around the site in response to the parking issues.

Ward councillor Ken Finch said: "The three ward councillors have been having calls during the night (about disturbances).

"At the moment the players are disturbing quite a number of residents. We are very concerned."

## Obstructive parking near hospital



Cars clogging up Ashenhurst Road at the back of Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley

PARKING fines have been dished out on roads surrounding Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital as part of a crackdown on obstructive parking.

Four cars were ticketed last Wednesday morning, while dozens more were spotted parked on kerbs and across driveways along The Oval, Ashenhurst Road, Mid-depark Road and Overfield Road.

Councillor Cathryn Bayton, who represents the St James'

Ward, labelled it an on-going problem. She said: "I know that it is a massive problem on the whole of the estate.

## Permits

"Myself and the other two ward councillors have previously done some work with the residents to see if we could introduce parking permits and guaranteed parking spaces for them, but there would

have been a cost with that. If double yellow lines were placed there then it would also hinder them parking outside their homes so there is not a huge amount the council can do about it if vehicles are parking legally.

"If they are illegally parking up then that is another issue."

From April 1 to March 21 2015, a total of 566 parking tickets were handed out – more than 10 a week.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

## Homes plan at social club site

A SOCIAL club in Dudley will be knocked down to make way for new homes.

The Pensnett and Bromley Services Memorial Club in Bradley Street is to be bulldozed after the plans were backed by Dudley Council. It will allow for nine to and three-bed properties to be built.

Plans show the homes all being fitted onto the site of the club.

Council planners said the development was considered to be appropriate, and that it would have a positive impact on the area.

## Decades nights continue at hall

ULTIMATE Decades nights and video-screened discos are to continue for the rest of the year at Brierley Hill Civic Hall.

The venue, managed by Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), holds regular Soul and Motown and Club Tropicana 80s nights alongside family discos.

Decades nights takes place tomorrow night (Friday), with a Soul and Motown evening on Saturday and a Family Disco the following week. Email [andy@ultimate1.co.uk](mailto:andy@ultimate1.co.uk) or call 0121 515 4180 or 01384 573381.

## Trade school aims to share skills

A NEW project which encourages people in the Dudley borough to share skills and talents has launched.

Trade School Dudley classes are run at the DY1 venue in Stafford Street.

People can find out more at [www.tradeschool.coop/dudley/](http://www.tradeschool.coop/dudley/)

Trade schools runs on the principal of bartering with anyone able to teach something they are skilled at or passionate about. People attending can pay for them by trading their own skills, food, supplies or advice.

## Launch of new bus route to link towns

A NEW bus service has been launched between Stourbridge and Kidderminster. Diamond will run the 25 between the two towns, creating a new link between its West Midlands and Worcestershire networks.

The new route will operate an hourly service Monday to Saturday, with buses from 7.30am to 6.25pm.

A spokesman said: "For those travelling from Stourbridge the service opens up a new opportunity to connect with lots of areas."

## Glass festival dates set

THE International Festival of Glass is returning to Stourbridge next month.

The dates for the festival have been confirmed as August 25 to 28.

Events and exhibitions will be taking place at venues, studios and workshops including Ruskin Glass Centre and Red House Glass Cone, Wordsley.

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# Unable to continue services

EACH September the members of the Stourbridge Branch of the Royal Air Forces Association have organised a service of Remembrance in Oldswinford Parish Church and lately in Mary Stevens Park on Battle of Britain Sunday.

In 2014 I announced at the end of the parade service that we would not be having further services.

However 2015 was the 75th anniversary of the 1940 Battle of Britain so we organised a service to mark that special occasion.

In January his year the branch members again began to think about the difficulties we faced holding the annual service with depleted numbers. In June we discussed whether we should be planning for September 19.

We concluded, sadly, that we are unable to continue the annual park services. We are very sorry to disappoint so many of the pub-

lic who have joined us each year. In further discussions about September we decided, as a branch, to gather together on Battle of Britain Day (September 15 each year) for a brief act of remembrance and to lay our wreath at the park memorial.

We have met each year with memories of the men and women who have served in the Royal Air Force since 1918 and who lost their lives especially those who lived in the town and we shared our lives with around the world.

Our thanks go to our MPs who joined us each year, the Mayor and our local councillors who have supported us, the members of the Air Training Corps especially the members of their band, the local St John Ambulance, the police, the PA team and the park staff.

REVD TOM CHAPMAN  
Chairman/Chaplain

# What will happen to vulnerable

AS a volunteer with Age UK Dudley – and I have used services offered by Springboard – I feel angry at the cuts by Dudley Council and the lottery to these two services which help retired (who have not got a lot of money), handicapped and housebound people.

For the people who do not know, Age UK volunteers give up their time to visit housebound lonely people or to telephone people who may not speak to anyone else, perhaps only carers who rush in and out because of the number of people they have to look after.

I wonder if the councillors have thought that they could help by giving up some of their pay/expenses and just do the job like others for nothing.

What is going to happen to all these lonely vulnerable people? You might need the service sometime.

J DAVIES  
Kingswinford

# We all have a right to our own opinion

I AM fed up with people who voted remain who infer that those who voted leave to be aged, uninformed, racist and lacking any form of intelligence.

Their remarks are always rude, insulting and offensive.

We all have a right to our own opinion when voting and one way or another, have to accept the outcome.

J MITCHELL  
Halesowen

# Agree with cutbacks – but not this

OH dear, Dudley Council, what have you done?

As a volunteer working with Age UK, Dudley, I know how the service we give will affect the older generation who depend on us.

I am a good neighbour volunteer.

I spend quite a few hours of my time to visit elderly people to chat and have a cuppa.

The joy on their faces says it all for me, so, Dudley Council, you go out and ask the clients who can't get out, and who may not see anybody for days or weeks, what it will do them.

I am well aware of the cutbacks you have had to make but this is a bad choice.

I will not disappoint my clients like you have.

J BENNETT  
Age UK volunteer  
Lower Gornal

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## POST

Dudley Chronicle,  
Chronicle Editorial,  
51-53 Queen Street  
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

## EMAIL

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

# The frog population has been decimated

THIS time of the year is special for many of those with a garden pond, with frogs. If you are lucky you will see baby frogs struggling to leave the pool and reach dry land.

From then on you could find them mainly under cover anywhere as they attempt to hide from predators, while at the same time looking for a safe haven. Sadly the mortality rate must be very high. As for those that mature into fully grown frogs, what do they eat in their early years to keep themselves going?

Overall in many areas the population has been decimated through more and more demand on open spaces. When winter approaches I try and create as much ground cover as I can in the garden for frogs that don't hibernate in the pool. I will keep flying the flag for frogs as long as I can.

A P CUFF  
Stourbridge

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Percy Stallard, pioneer racer at Brooklands



Viking Cycles ran a very successful racing team. This show team members in 1951



Bob Thom led the Viking Cycles team. Here he is in a road race



Hugh Porter, winner of four world pursuit titles

# Town ahead of the field for producing bicycles

**WOLVERHAMPTON** used to be the most important town for bicycle manufacturing in the country.

At the end of the 19th century there were 30 cycle manufacturers in the town and only five in Nottingham. A total of over 80 have been identified in Wolverhampton over the years.

These range from major makers like Sunbeam, Star, Wearwell and Viking to small back street workshops.

The skill-base of the town was always literally metal bashing, tinplate manufacture, and this translated easily to making bicycles when the craze for them spread across the country in the late 19th century. The 'Rolls-Royce' of makers was Sunbeam, op-

## MEMORY LANE

By Alec Brew

erating from the huge Sunbeamland works on Penn Road, with their gold pinstripping, and the chain enclosed in a 'little oil bath'.

The mighty Villiers Company was started just to make cycle parts for Sunbeam, initially pedal blocks. Many manufacturers moved on to making motorbikes, often, initially, by attaching a small engine to a bicycle frame, like Wearwell making Wolf motorbikes.

Cycle racing was hugely popular in the town, with crowds of thousands flocking to the Molineux to watch the races, before the football team took

over the site. One of the most influential racers in Britain was Percy Stallard who was born in his father's cycle shop in Broad Street, and pioneered mass start road races, like the Tour de France, when the national authorities only licensed time trials.

After the war Viking Cycles ran a very successful racing team led by Bob Thom, and the town's main cycling club Wolverhampton Wheelers produced great champions like Hugh Porter and Andy Tennant.

The cycle makers have all gone now, but the Tettenhall Transport Heritage Centre feature the city's bike heritage with examples of Sunbeam, Wearwell and Viking bicycles on display, and are always looking for other examples.



Peter and Harry Stant on Wearwell and Viking cycles at the Heritage Centre



Most famous Sunbeam bicycle devotee, Edward Elgar



Andy Tennant, one of the current top British cyclists

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# College course adds up to new life for Stan, 87

A PENSIONER has shown age is no barrier after returning to the classroom 73 years after leaving school.

Stan Holley has not let being 87 years old stop him from attending English and maths lessons every Friday at Stourbridge College.

"Coming to college has given me a new lease of life," said Mr Holley, from Stourbridge, who left school aged 14 to train as a carpenter.

"I enrolled on my courses last September and it's done me a lot of good to be able to better myself," he said.

Stan is also getting on well with his classmates, including sharing a fist bump with 19-year-old fellow maths and English student Liam Thomas.

## Fazed

Teachers have noted how the great-grandfather has not only got to grips with everything from grammar to graphs, his exam marks have also improved as well.

"I achieved 75 per cent and 69 per cent in my last maths and English tests and I am aiming for top marks," he said. "I've come this far so it seems silly not to aim higher. Being in college hasn't fazed me at all.

"Everyone here wants the same thing, which is to learn and we all support one another. The teachers are fantastic too."

Mr Holley's family, including his two sons and three great-grandchildren, are also keeping a close eye on his progress.

He said: "My family have been encouraging me to keep active. I was a carpenter for 50 years and retired to take care of my late wife who was ill."

"I kept up with the carpentry, fixing up a few bits of furniture around the house but I'm not physically able to do as much as I used to."

"This is what spurred me into com-



Stan Holley, aged 87, with fellow student Liam Thomas, 19

ing back to education, along with becoming a widower.

"I'm so glad I became a student again. I do have homework and the lessons can be challenging, but they're also quite social."

"There's a wide mix of people. Although we all like to have a laugh and joke, we soon knuckle down when our teachers expect us to," he said.

On completing his Functional Skills English and maths programmes, Stan hopes to begin Level 1 qualifications in September.

"There's so much out there to discover, especially with emails and researching things online," Stan added. "I love the idea of being able to explore and having something to show for it afterwards by way of an exam result, essay mark and qualification."

Stourbridge College is part of Birmingham Metropolitan College (BMet), one of the largest further education colleges in the UK, providing a wide range of education, training and apprenticeship courses across the West Midlands.

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# Sons will never forgive their brutal killer father

**THE devastated family of Paul Abbott have vowed never to forgive him for the savage murder of his wife Jackie.**

Their son Martyn said: "To listen to the detail of the injuries she suffered was truly heartbreaking. "The fact that he was the man who was supposed to love and care for her makes it far more difficult to understand."

"I do not think we will ever come to terms with it. It is the hardest thing we have every had to deal with. We all worked together and lived together. We have got to pick ourselves up and start again from scratch."

"We are committed to keeping her name alive and the reopening of the business in her name is the start of that."

## Birthday

The 25-year-old and brother Ryan, 22, launched JMR Tackle on what would have been her 55th birthday a couple of months ago – the title includes the initial of their Christian names and that of their mother – on the Enterprise Trading Estate in Brierley Hill where Mrs Abbott, her husband and their two sons ran a similar business until the murder.

The brothers said: "Mum was such a happy fun loving person we want to pay tribute to her in a positive way."

Martyn added: "We cannot explain our pain at the loss of our beloved mother. He should have been protecting her and us."

As his father from Lodge Crescent, Netherton started a life sentence with a minimum 15 years behind bars for the murder, Martyn added: "We have lost two of the most important people in our lives."

Mr Jonathan Rose, defending Abbott told Wolverhampton Crown Court when sentence was passed: "There is nothing I can say or he can do to change the hurt he caused that night."

Both Mr and Mrs Abbott each had



Sons Martyn and Ryan Abbott



Killer Paul Abbott



Victim Jacqueline Abbott

two children from a previous relationship before they married and together had Martyn and Ryan. It is understood that his first wife left him and moved to Wales in a bid to escape from his increasingly threatening behaviour.

The 57-year-old businessman bludgeoned Mrs Abbott at least 16 times over the head and body with a hammer while chasing her round the house and into the garden after she had made up her mind to leave him.

The couple – married for 28 years – had increasingly argued over his gambling during the final year of the victim's life, it was said. He refused to give his wife her wages on December 3 and two days later she went alone

to visit long time friend Pat, who said: "She was more than a sister to me. Her loss has left a huge void in my life."

Meanwhile he had blown £11,500 in two days at a casino. When Jackie returned on December 11 to go to an Elvis tribute concert, she wanted to attend with friends, not her husband.

He snatched her handbag looking for his ticket which he feared was to be given to somebody else, sparking a struggle. Abbott grabbed a hammer while she frantically tried to protect herself from the onslaught.

He pleaded guilty to murder and was ordered to spend at least 15 years in prison before becoming eligible for parole.

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# Vintage books with real ‘fairy tale’ ending

## ANTIQUES & COLLECTIBLES

By John Ridgway of Perry & Phillips



**WE often see children’s books during our valuation days and asked how much they might sell for at auction.**

The answer is it depends entirely on who the authors are, how old they are and in what condition they are but, having said all that, certain vintage children’s books do tend to catch the collector’s eye.

Really good old copies of classics such as Alice in Wonderland would definitely sell well, as would The Wind in the Willows, Anne of Green Gables and the Tales of Beatrix Potter.

There are also certain authors to look out for, such as Roald Dahl, A A Milne, Rudyard Kipling, Laura Ingells Wilder, Noel Streatfield, Raymond Briggs, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Enid Blyton – the list is endless.

Old books of fairy tales are also nice to collect and display, as are vintage volumes about nature, birds and so on written especially for children.

The Narnia classics by C S Lewis are always hugely popular, as are old copies of wonderful books such as Moonfleet and White Fang.

Older favourites like The Water Babies would sell well, as would vintage copies of Aesop’s Fables.

Pretty dust jackets do attract the buyers and Victorian and Edwardian children’s books often featured very beautifully decorated spines and jackets.

The ultimate attraction for a buyer of books at auction is a first edition, so check the publication date – if there is only one, you could be on to a winner.

Many of these books will have been well looked after,



with pages intact and illustrations unmarked, and if they have leather spines that all adds to the value.

Prices do vary dramatically and that really is down to age, rarity and condition, a first-edition of an Enid Blyton Famous Five book could

be worth hundreds if it still has its original dust jacket – but without it the value will drop to a very reduced figure.

The ‘best sellers’ in terms of vintage children’s books are usually the classics, I’ve recently seen a 1935 copy of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland, with pristine book jacket and colour plates, sell for thousands on the internet, also an Enid Blyton Five Get Into Trouble first edition go for £200.

It is important to remember that the illustrator of the book makes a difference to value, so again check that any book you would like valued names the original one.

Vintage children’s books usually sell for between £10 and £100 at auction, depending on condition.

Many will have been damaged with use, had pages torn and illustrations ‘added to’ with colouring pens or lost their original jackets along the way.

So if you have a good old copy or a first edition it’s well worth getting it valued, it may well catch a collector’s eye in the saleroom.

**Perry and Phillips Auctioneers hold sales of antiques and collectables on the first Tuesday of each month. Valuation days, for sale items only, are held every Wednesday at the Mill Street saleroom, from 10am until 4pm. August’s sale takes place next Tuesday, from 10.30am.**

# So many trends influence what we decide to eat



Healthy food options are out there

I WONDER if any of us realise the effect trends have on our food and eating habit?

This year it is all about coconut oil and superfoods, the list almost never ending but generally healthy foods full of vitamins, minerals and a source of antioxidants (believed to protect our cells).

Almonds, brazil nuts, avocados, bananas, beans, lentils, broccoli, fish and blueberries to name just a few.

It has been a few years since we were told to eat five portions of fruit and veg a day and drink two litres of water, a trend that persists and is advertised fully in all areas of our everyday life.

Over the past week we have been told to take Vitamin D supplements during the winter, the local chemist shelves were empty of Vitamin D product today. A couple of years ago Omega 3 was the ultimate requirements for improved brain function.

If we followed all the health advice on our television screens we would be confused and very poor.

Healthy lunches “on the go” are popular and the supermarkets advertise the benefits

## STYLE FOCUS

with Janet Timmis



of their options, including part of your “five a day” and teamed with smoothies and fruit juices. McDonalds, Subway and Greggs are improving their offerings after constant criticism.

“In Vogue” meal kits are suddenly popular, the best of healthy ingredients for your evening meal with cooking instructions included and delivered to your door. Easy for the working couple to eat well, at a price of course, and practical for rigid slimming programmes.

We have been trying “The Body Coach menus – Lean in 15”.

These recipes are generally made in 15 minutes full of protein and great flavours, it has been incredibly enjoyable and based on the social media posts very popular.

It seems well balanced and considerably

healthier than previous trends such as the Atkins Diet but it, like the others, will have a lifespan and be replaced by a new and improved version. Trendy is expensive.

There are also distinct trends when we eat out, the gastro pub has made way for the contemporary menu with grazing boards, locally sourced foods and specialist wines and beers to compliment.

International food continues to develop a place on the high street, allowing us to try wide and varied cultural tastes and the creativity of our restaurant chefs delight with unusual works of art on a plate. Who remembers nouvelle cuisine, the tiniest meal on a huge white plate, never enough to sustain life but “the thing” in the 80s?

Baking remains the favourite home trend, with popularity in decorated celebration cakes and cup cakes ever growing, spurred on by the love of Bake Off and the ever increasing list of foodie shows.

The most exciting trend of the moment though is the supermarkets sending “out of date” and excess food to food banks to benefit the less fortunate of us, long may it last.



Whether you're planning to head off now or at a later, quieter time, it is vital to consider travel insurance, not just to protect yourself but also your valuables

# Make sure you are covered for great summer getaway



Some travel policies exclude pensioners

**THE summer holiday has started and many of us will be looking forward to a holiday abroad.**

But David Sheridan of Age UK Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin, warns that it’s vital to consider travel insurance to protect yourself and your valuables .

“Our own research shows the top three considerations for over 65s when purchasing travel insurance are cover for treatment of a serious illness (79%), personal injury (57%) and repatriation (54%).

“Before buying any policy, travellers should check the document details to ensure they are aware of what is and isn’t included as standard so they can travel safe in the knowledge that the insurance will cover them if it is needed.”

Age UK Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin has put together the following tips to help travellers know what to look out for when purchasing a travel insurance policy.

1. Upper age limits. Insurers often include upper age limits on their policies, which means they won’t cover older travellers. So it pays to shop around and look for insurers that don’t apply such limits and will cater specifically to your needs.

2. Your health and pre-existing medical conditions. Insurers will not cover claims di-

By Sophie Madden

rectly arising from any pre-existing medical conditions unless you have declared them. There are many conditions which may seem immaterial to going on a holiday but it is always best to declare, especially common conditions such as heart conditions, cancer, breathing conditions (including asthma), and diabetes.

3. How much you plan to travel. If you are planning to make several trips in a year, you may get a better deal by buying an annual multi-trip policy rather than a number of single trips.

4. Limits on trip duration. If you decide to purchase an annual multi-trip policy, check the maximum trip duration cover. This differs across insurers and is important, especially if you’re planning a longer getaway.

5. Cover for the whole holiday. If you are purchasing single trip insurance, ensure that the policy covers you for the whole time you will be away, including the days you will be travelling on. Your policy will end at midnight on the day you specify, so make sure you purchase an extra day’s cover if you are travelling back in the early hours of the morning.

6. Policy limits. Policy limits exist for both your overall “suitcase” and for individual items. It’s important to check these

and consider covering any big ticket items separately. Make a list or take a photo of what’s included in your luggage, and, if you can, keep a receipt for any high value items.

7. European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). Some insurers insist you carry an EHIC whilst travelling and many will waive the excess of your claim if you have one. However, before purchasing, check the insurer’s terms and conditions and ask what their policy includes to clarify this. It’s important to note that an EHIC is not a substitute for travel insurance.

8. Unexpected event cover. Almost every insurer is different when it comes to the unexpected events they cover. Some cover for delays or cancellations caused by volcanic ash cloud, flight delays or acts of terrorism, while others don’t.

9. Holiday activities. If you are planning on taking part in activities such as horse riding, jet skiing or scuba diving whilst on holiday, you’ll need to make sure that the policy will cover you in the event you have an accident.

10. Missed departure cover. Check the conditions of a missed departure from the insurer. Most will cover if the car or airport transfer bus breaks down for example; but if you didn’t leave enough time to get to the airport or ferry terminal, your claim could be invalid.

## Archbishop to meet Merry Hill shoppers

The visit will end on October 9 with a visit to Merry Hill shopping centre from 2.30pm, concluding with a 'Songs of Praise' style event.

# MP voices fears over rail service reduction

## Free poetry walks held in town park

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# Radiographer struck off over indecent images of children

INDECENT images of children were discovered on a radiographer's laptop while he was staying at a flat at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital.

Anthony Davies has now been struck off after being convicted of possessing images of girls as young as 12. His secret was uncovered when a friend logged on to his laptop at the hospital flat where he was living, a Health and Care Professions Council disciplinary panel was told.

They had to decide whether Davies, aged 26, could have a future in the profession following his convictions. He had been working at Russells Hall for around two years when the discovery was made in 2014. When his laptop was seized, no images were found as a new operating system had been installed which would have erased any that were there, the panel heard.

However, 36 Category C images were discovered when experts analysed his phone. A Category C image is an indecent image of a child, but not one involving sexual activity.

## Beacon Centre funds boost to tune of £119k

THE Beacon Centre for the Blind has been awarded more than £119,000 by two leading funding groups.

The centre in Wolverhampton Road, Sedgley, has been awarded the cash by the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund.

The money will support 100 visually impaired people over the age of 24 living in the Wolverhampton area.

It will help them to find employment and boost social skills through IT training, cookery courses and financial workshops.

It follows Dudley Council cutting £250,000 of funding a year to the charity.

Head of charity operations Katie Jobling said: "We want to break down barriers to employment by improving people's confidence. Improving people's life skills will help them throughout their working life."

"We are looking forward to forging new partnerships as we deliver this project."

### Expectation

Davies pleaded guilty to making indecent images on his laptop and phone at Dudley Magistrates Court last October. He was given a four-year jail term, suspended for 24 months, and a supervision order.

Panel members concluded hospital patients 'would not expect to be treated by a radiographer who had so recently been convicted of offences of this nature', and that 'the expectation would be underlined by the fact that Davies is still subject to a suspended sentence of imprisonment'.

Paula Clark, chief executive of the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, said: "Following his arrest he was immediately suspended and then referred to his professional body. He has not worked for the Trust since October 2015."

## Colourful way to raise charity cash



Olivia Parker, aged 12, has raised money for Cancer Research UK by dyeing her hair

A YOUNG fundraiser from Dudley pulled in hundreds of pounds for a cancer charity by dyeing her hair.

Olivia Parker, who goes to Ounsdale High School in Wombourne, raised money for Cancer Research UK by having her hair coloured.

Proud mother Michelle said 12-year-old Olivia had been inspired to raise cash after two other family members were diagnosed with cancer.

Mrs Parker said: "Olivia just said one day 'I'm going to die my hair blue' and was going to raise some money while doing it."

"She emailed her school to make sure it was cleared with them."

"She has had lots of support from people, including Guest Hospital in Dudley where I work, Milking Bank Nursery and from family and friends. We've worked out that she has earned around £321."

Olivia said she had been thinking about doing something for the charity for 'a long time' and finally decided on her fundraiser.

"For quite a long time I wanted to do something for charity and wanted to support Cancer Research," she said.

"Since I had my hair dyed everyone has been really supportive - my friends have been amazing and supported me all the way through, my family have been great and my school have as well."

"I had this idea for a while, but before I thought of other things like running fun runs and things like that."

"One of my other ideas is to fill my Wellington boots with custard."

## Drivers are warned of disruptions

DRIVERS are facing huge disruption due to roadworks along the A449.

Two separate schemes will take place on the Stourbridge Road stretching from the edge of Wolverhampton down to Wombourne.

Parts of the dual carriageway will be restricted to a single lane between the Penn Road roundabout and Wombourne as repairs are carried out on street lights and signage.

The whole scheme is expected to last until August 11, with drivers warned they face major disruption. There will be no work over this weekend.

Staffordshire County Council said the work - part of a £230,000 investment on its roads - would make 'significant improvements' to the network. Highways chiefs also said the work would be carried out with the 'minimum of disturbance to the local community'.

Kingswinford councillor Patrick Harley said the roadworks would cause problems but that improvements to the road were needed.

He said: "The roadworks are essential. Both authorities in Dudley and Staffordshire have been liaising and they have got to try and get it done with the minimum impact on people."

"It is never easy having to divert people, it is always causing chaos but unfortunately it needs to be done."

## Family fun day held in aid of rugby club

A FAMILY fun day is being held in aid of Dudley Kingswinford Rugby Club this month.

Brierley Hill-based law firm Higgs & Sons is putting on the event in aid of the Stroke Association on August 21. The event, off Swindon Road, Wall Heath, runs from noon to 3pm. It will include a sports day, barbecue and children's activities.

For further information call 0345 1115050.

Quote: JGRT

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HAVE you got what it takes to win become Sandwell's Strongest Man 2016 – or know anyone who could and should be entering?

The biceps-bulging battle goes from strength to strength, taking place on August 13-14, from 11am-4pm, at Sandwell Valley Park on Salters Lane in West Bromwich – as part of the Summer in the Valley Festival.

Disciplines for 2016 include the giant dumbbell press, overhead log lift, giant tyre and hay flip, vehicle pull, farmer's walk, stones of strength, arm over arm pull, carry and drag, dead lift and the super yoke.

There are again two weight category competitions (under 90kg and over 90kg), entry fee is £20, or free to Sandwell Leisure Trust ONE card holders. The deadline is one week

before the event. Simon Foster, duty manager at Hadley Stadium Leisure Centre, said: "It's always a great spectacle.

"Sam Hickman from Sandwell won the Under 90kg event last year at the first attempt, while Nathan Brown from Blackheath won the heavier category for the second year running, although he's away this year so there will definitely be a new Over 90kg champion."

## Rules

Visit <https://www.slt-leisure.co.uk/News/sandwell's-strongest-man-2016-1093.aspx> to download the registration form and rules; pick up a strongman kit at Hadley Stadium Leisure Centre on Wilson Road, or call them on 0300 012 0121.

You can also email [Hadleystadiuminfo@slt-leisure.co.uk](mailto:Hadleystadiuminfo@slt-leisure.co.uk)



Strongman entrants Gavin Davies and Jacob Blake, 23 with duty manager Simon Foster

# YouTube hit is star turn at comedy club

BLACK Country comic Jonny Cole is the latest headliner to take centre stage at a comedy club in Stourbridge.

Guitar-wielding Jonny, from Wednesbury, has a growing legion of fans after seeing a number of hilarious songs about life and love in the Black Country become viral Youtube hits.

He will be at Fitz of Laughter Comedy Club, held in the marquee at Katie Fitzgerald's, tomorrow night (Friday) from 8.30pm.

The club, which runs on the first Friday of every month in the marquee at the Enville Street venue, in Wollaston, has been sold out for every show this year.

It has played host to the likes of Gary Delaney, Zoe Lyons, John Robertson, Nathan Caton, Barbara Nice, Sean Percival and Patrick Monahan.

Support to Cole on the night will be provided by two award-winning pro comics in the shape of Bryan Lacey and Tom Glover. Resident compere, Dudley's Wayne Beese, hosts. Tickets are £10, with no booking fee, online at [www.skiddle.com/e/12751344](http://www.skiddle.com/e/12751344) or by calling Wayne on 07759543750.

# Shake-up on cards for health services

HEALTH services across Dudley could face a shake-up with a public consultation under way into how they are run.

Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) says it aims to 'help shape the future' of health care in the borough with the development of a Multi-speciality Community Provider (MCP), bringing together a range of services.

It would see GP practices, nurses, mental health and community-based services such as physiotherapy and hospital specialists coming together as a single organisation to act as one team to provide care in the community that 'puts patients at the centre'.

CCG bosses say that they have been working with other health and care organisations, who all agree that there is a 'better way for services to operate'.

## Feedback

Dr David Hegarty, GP and chairman of Dudley CCG, said: "We have been having conversations with our local communities for some time now and we have used this feedback to help design a new model of care.

"We want to make it easier for health and care staff to work together to deliver services to Dudley people.

"We think bringing these services together into a single new organisation will make a difference.

"We now want views on which services should be included, the way that organisation works and the way that we measure how successful they are."

By Clare Butler

The consultation was launched last week and will run until September 9. The consultation document can be read at [www.dudleyccg.nhs.uk/mcpconsult](http://www.dudleyccg.nhs.uk/mcpconsult)

CCG executive officer Paul Maubach, chief executive officer at Dudley CCG, said: "We know that many of you really appreciate the NHS and what it does for you and you have lots of really good things to say about the services you use and the staff you come into contact with.

"We also know that sometimes it can be really frustrating and that things could work better. Dudley is recognised nationally leading the way in improving the way care is organised and delivered.

"We think a new Multi-speciality Community Provider will make a positive difference to people using health and care services in Dudley."

Public meetings, online surveys and booklets will also be available in GP practices, along with details of events and more focussed sessions.

# Rock Choir has the crowd on their feet

MORE than 100 Rock Choir members from around the Black Country had the audience at the Glasshouse Arts Centre in Ambleside up on their feet.

Singers performed the likes of Queen's Don't Stop Me Now and the Erasare hit A Little Respect, led by choir leader Christa Hugo.

The evening, on July 22, raised £265 for the Brierley Hill Samaritans.

Stourbridge member, Annette Bagnall, said: "I joined Rock Choir in January knowing it would be 'my kind of thing', but the icing on the cake has been making new friends and being humbled to see and feel the positive emotional effect Rock Choir has on people."

"I'm having a blast."

Rock Choir is the UK's largest contemporary choir, with in excess of 23,000 members in more than 320 local communities. Members get together each week for rehearsals.



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## Convenient tips ahead of club show

Clent Gardening Club

THERE was no monthly meeting in July. However, the second Friday in June saw around 30 members enjoy an evening visit to a fairly recently created garden at The Cheryls, Button Oak near Bewdley.

As usual, the evening was rounded off in very satisfactory fashion with tea, coffee and helpings of home-made cake.

The first Sunday in May saw around 40 members and guests set off on the club's annual outing which this year was a return visit to The Royal Horticultural Society's magnificent gardens at Wisley in Surrey. Shortly after arrival members were swallowed up touring the extensive grounds, huge glass house and various show gardens.

The July meeting welcomed Roger Umpleby for a talk on the presentation of flowers and produce for local shows, conveniently timed to aid members before the annual Clent Flower Show on the first Saturday in September.

Roger gave many useful tips on the correct way to display produce supported by a fine selection of colour slides to reinforce his tips.

On August 26, the club welcomes David Morgan for a talk entitled "NGS - Is my garden good enough?"

Meetings are at Clent Village Hall on the fourth Friday each month.

Further details are at <https://clentgardening-club.wordpress.com> or by contacting chairman Martin Grange on 01562 883009/07917 184762.

## Illustrating how to make do and mend

### Touch of colour to mark Queen's 90th

THE July meeting was completely taken over by the annual summer party, dedicated this year to the celebration of the Queen's 90th birthday.

Most members had entered into the spirit of the occasion by wearing something in the traditional red, white and blue. With the tables also adorned with flags, serviettes and table cloths in these hues, the hall was a mass of colour.

Chairman Julie Willetts proposed the Royal toast to Her Majesty with a provided, non-alcoholic summer drink and the party got under way.

No speaker had been arranged, but a new system involving everyone at moving three places to their left after the first course caused much disruption and amusement.

### Wollaston E TWG

This system was supposed to encourage meeting new people and to get the party going - and it did!

The evening was rounded off with an extensive raffle and quite a few members went home with prizes. No official business took place but everyone was reminded that there was no meeting during August and the club meets again in September, after hopefully having enjoyed a lovely, sunny summer break. The chairman closed the evening by thanking all committee members for organising such a successful evening.

The next meeting is at 7.30pm, on September 13 at St James Church Hall, Wollaston. Non-members are most welcome.

### Kingswinford TWG

THERE was a good turnout of members for the usual meeting at Kingswinford Community Centre. Chairman Enid Fennell welcomed two visitors in the hope that they will become members.

The advertised speaker was not able to be present. Instead, Alan Thornton gave a thought-provoking illustrated talk entitled 'Make do and mend'. The theme was pointing out the differences between 'then and now', as we are becoming increasingly throwaway society.

Guild business was executed, with good news that a cheque had arrived from 'Gift Aid'. There was also good news in that Sheila Watts will soon be returning from caring for her son following an accident.

The sub-sections announced their plans. The next lunch will be at The Vine, Wombourne, on August 7.

Chris Grove thanked the speaker. Sue Wilson provided a lovely pot plant to cheer up the room, which was donated as a raffle prize. The raffle was won by Sue Cotterell and Marion Alman.

## Hooked on Mother of Pearl

ACTING chairman Chris Holton presided over July's monthly meeting at Grange Court, Stourbridge. She read out the previous minutes which were agreed and signed.

Treasurer Jill Attwood gave an up-to-date financial report and secretary Jean Williams thanked all members who attended the dinner at The Brasserie in Kidderminster.

Guest speaker George Hook gave an enjoyable talk on 'Mother of Pearl'. He

### Grange (E) Guild

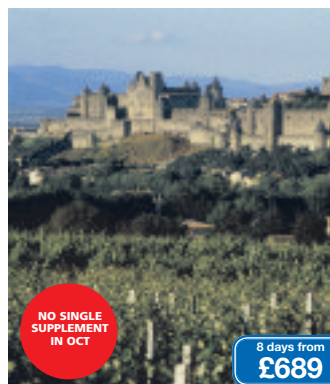
brought along a selection of buttons, hair adornments and cutlery with pearl handles that he had made and passed them around.

He showed a range of shells that he had ground and polished before using them to make genuine mother of pearl items.

Refreshments were served and the raffle drawn with four lucky winners.

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# Devil Red band takes stage at city venue

A ROCK band from Dudley will be playing a charity gig in Wolverhampton this weekend.

Devil Red, from Netherton, will be taking to the stage for a charity gig at The Slade Rooms on Saturday.

The band comprising of Grant Silk

on vocals, Ant Lunn on guitar Jordan Staten on bass and Mike Piggott on drums, have been together for seven years. Profits from the gig will go to Cancer Research UK.

Midlands heavy rock outfit Crows and Crosses will also be playing, along

with 1980s style hard rock band Shy-ryne from Wolverhampton – their last gig with current drummer Dave Harvey. Doors open at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £5.50 from the Midland Box Office on 0870 320 7000 or online at [www.wolvescivc.co.uk](http://www.wolvescivc.co.uk)

# Drivers face hefty bills after cars are scratched by yobs

## Councillor in clean-up



Councillor Stuart Henley who tided up along Olive Hill Road, Halesowen

A COUNCILLOR and his partner took it upon themselves to clean up an alleyway after residents complained of its condition.

Councillor Stuart Henley, for Halesowen North ward, spent several hours cleaning up the alleyway in his constituency with his partner Sue Longmore.

He then planted wild seeds along the path to spruce up the area for the future.

He said: "On July 24 after calls from residents asking for a gully to be cleared of weeds and rubbish, I took it on myself along with my partner to go and do this clean up."

"It took a couple of hours hard work but we collected around six bags of rubbish and weeds."

"After the clear up I planted wild plant seeds along the way and hope this will help brighten up the gully."

"If any other area wishes help please get in touch and let's get a group of residents together to take pride and help clean up."

He added: "Due to hard cuts that have and are being made throughout the borough we all need to get community minded and get out there and do what we can ourselves."

"Yes we pay our taxes but we do need to do our bit."

"If we just clean up outside our own properties and maybe next door if they are unable to this would go a long way to make the areas cleaner."

"Some may be more reluctant to drop litter and let their dogs foul."

YOBs keyed dozens of vehicles parked on the Wrens Nest estate leaving residents with repair bills running into hundreds of pounds.

Police say they received 21 reports of cars and vans being targeted in just one night.

Officers assured residents that patrols in and around the area had now been 'stepped up'.

Neighbours in Willow Road, where it is believed around six vehicles were targeted, spoke out after the spat.

One man, who did not wish to be named, said his auntie had been visiting when her car was damaged.

He said: "In total it was probably about six vehicles that were targeted, including a couple of vans."

"It seemed that someone had gone from the top of the road to the bottom with what looked like a stone and scratched them one after another."

"My auntie came to visit and when she came out she saw all the left side of her car scratched down that side."

"It will cost her hundreds of pounds to repair."

### Unacceptable

Another neighbour spoke of her upset at having her brand new Ford Fiesta scratched on the back door.

She said: "It's a 16 plate car and I've only had it a month. I didn't even notice until I came out at about 4.30ish. It's just unacceptable, we won't know how much it will cost until we get a bodywork estimate."

Inspector Laura Jones, who oversees policing in the area, said a suspect had been identified and would be spoken to in due course.

She said: "This is clearly concerning for local residents and we are taking the matter extremely seriously. Our patrols in and around the area have been stepped up in order to prevent any further offences."

"A suspect has been identified and will be spoken to in due course but I would be keen to hear from anyone who may have any information about who is responsible for causing this damage."

Anyone with any concerns is urged to contact Dudley Police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Earlier this year vehicles were targeted in Wall Well, Halesowen. Police released CCTV footage showing a man stroll up to an Audi and casually scratch both the passenger and driver's sides of the vehicle.

The vandal struck at about 11pm on a Friday night.

# Offers invited as landmark club is put on the market

A LANDMARK club which closed unexpectedly after more than 100 years has been put up for sale.

Tipton Conservative & Unionist Club on Union Street suddenly shut its doors in January.

Now the 0.36 acre site is on the market as a freehold with Birmingham-based estate agents Colliers. A price tag has not been put on the property, but offers are invited.

The historic building has an extension to the rear, a 30 space car park, enclosed private yard plus beer patio with smoking shelter. It had previously been home to Tipton Civic Society.

Society chairman Keith Hodgkins said he hoped any potential developers didn't demolish it. "Sadly I cannot see it being viable as another pub or club," he said.

"It is sad to see the end of it as it was but we can only hope someone comes along and converts it into a new use."

"It may even be demolished as there is a big car park at the back, but we would not want that as it has been such a distinctive building and part of the town for many

years." Since the building closed, Civic Society meetings have been held at the church in Owen Street.

The building had previously been a flour mill before becoming a Conservative club in 1909.

The sale advert on Colliers states there is a pool, darts and bar room, lower ground floor/basement concert room and first floor snooker room.

### Fixtures

There is also an office and private manager's flat comprising of three bedrooms, lounge, kitchen and bathroom. No fixtures and fittings will be included in the sale.

Ian Walsh, from Colliers, said: "Offers are invited and anyone interested can directly get in touch with myself."

Tipton Green ward councillor Ian Jones said: "It's a substantial building and it's a shame that it was not viable in the end as like what happens with many pubs these days. We can only hope that there would be a good use for it still."

# Volunteers plea by first aid charity

ST John Ambulance is looking for volunteers from Dudley to help provide first aid cover at events around the Black Country.

Anyone joining the organisation is given advanced first aid training.

No previous experience or qualifications are required. Training is free. In return volunteers are required to attend two or more events per month to put those skills to the test out in the field.

New volunteers will join the newly reopened St John Ambulance unit in Dudley and will need to attend meetings regularly at the charity's base on Vicar Street to keep their skills up to date. The closing date for applications is August 10.

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# Film follows the descent of huge building into nothing more than rubble



The first part of the timelapse video, with the Brutalist-style building in tact



The demolition continues, with a careful eye on surrounding buildings



The new library begins to get more prominent in the background



Not much left for the expert demolition team to tackle in the square

**A TIMELAPSE video showing how the demolition of Birmingham's landmark Central Library evolved has been released online.**

The library, which has stood in the city centre for four decades, has been knocked down as part of a huge £500 million revamp.

It was once the cultural centre of the Second City, but has been torn apart thanks to a legion of machines.

## Bulldozed

The video speeds up the eight-month demolition of the iconic structure into a matter of minutes.

It shows how the iconic structure was bulldozed from the top down – then split into two before finally being entirely razed to the ground.

# The end of an era as Brum's brutalist library is no more

Workers from Birmingham-based demolition specialist DSM were tasked with the major overhaul of the land.

Machinery had to smash through layers of concrete at the site over Paradise Circus, which has forced road and route closures.

The work disrupted last year's German and

craft market events in the city after the route for people to walk between both was closed due to the works.

Office buildings, a hotel and open air walkways will be created on the area currently occupied by Central Library, Adrian Boulton Hall and the Copthorne Hotel.

Motorists have faced severe delays in and around the city centre as traffic has been re-routed around Paradise Circus island.

Construction work on the first of the new office blocks is expected to begin imminently. The first two buildings to be built will be completed during 2018 will be called One

and Two Chamberlain Square. This will total more than 350,000 sq ft of office space.

English Heritage put in a bid to have Birmingham Central Library, which opened in 1974, awarded listed status in 2009. The Central Library shut after the new £188 million Library of Birmingham opened in 2013.

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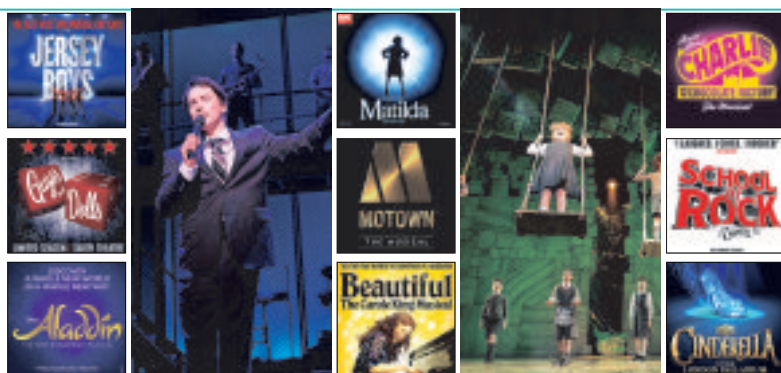
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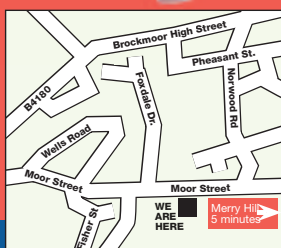
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Holidays are a time of real excitement for younger children



Debi Green advises finding ways to keep children occupied on the journey

# Keep calm – and enjoy your family summer holiday

Report by Lisa Salmon

**IT'S** nearly time for many families to escape the miserable British weather and jet off to sunnier climes.

But for a lot of parents, a sunshine break brings the same childcare and child entertainment responsibilities they have at home – and that doesn't make for holiday relaxation.

However, plan your holiday well and take the right equipment and toys, and the whole family can have a great holiday, promise travel and parenting experts.

Here are their top tips for happy holidays with the kids...

## TRAVELLING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Debi Green, founder of babygoes2.com, suggests:

- Take a holiday pack for toddlers of small activity items to dish out during your journey and the holiday itself. This could include a colouring book and crayons, puzzles, small toys like finger puppets, a picture or story book, and a scrapbook to put their memories from the trip in.

- Introduce a fixed and regular quiet time when young children always come out of the sun and concentrate on an activity from their holiday pack, and possibly have a nap. Make a communal "holiday chill area" in the shade, using lilo, towels, and pillows.
- Take children on a short treasure hunt and make a seaside or countryside sculpture from what they've collected.
- Take a few simple wrapped toys or games and create a lucky dip for mid-holiday excitement.

- If staying in a villa, pack a small paddling pool – fun for babies and tiny tots, and easy to monitor from your sun lounger.

- Organise a mini pool Olympics, which can be as simple as jumping in the pool, swimming to a rubber ring and picking up something from the pool floor, all timed.

- Encourage slightly older children to compile a holiday diary or scrapbook, or an online photo album.

## CATER FOR SUCCESS

Catherine Cooper (www.catherinecooper.net), author of Travelling With Children: A Parent's Guide (Need 2 Know, £9.99), suggests families with young children opt for self-catering accommodation if possible.

"You can prepare meals when you want, put them down for a nap when you want and sit outside and have a glass of wine while they sleep," she points out.

Cooper also believes kids' clubs are a "godsend", although she advises parents ask questions such as: What's the children-to-adult ratio? What are the opening times? And how are the age groups split?

She adds: "You probably won't want to send them off for the whole week, but a few mornings or afternoons here and there will give you the time to relax, and them the time to make new friends – and often try out some amazing activities."

## KEEP TEENS ENGAGED

Green warns that when it comes to hol-



It can be a stressful time – but get it right and holidays will create memories to savour for the whole family



Catherine Cooper's guide for travelling with children offers several useful tips

iday with teenagers, it's "slightly more tricky, since boredom looms a little larger on their horizon".

- If possible, choose a holiday with an element of independence – perhaps they can walk to a shop or the beach on their own.

- Give them their own space, perhaps a den or an area around the pool where they can chill.

- Plan to fend off boredom – days with a good mix of chilling and active periods work well.

## GROWN-UP TIME

Parents have to make time for themselves too – it is everyone's holiday after all. Green suggests that you:

- Remove obvious hazards that will thwart relaxation. Choose gated pools for non-swimmers, enclosed gardens, no high balconies or outside staircases.

- Consider holidaying with friends or family so you can take turns to supervise, and so the children have playmates.

- Hire a babysitter or nanny for a few hours as often as you can afford it. Green explains: "Children are relaxed because parents are still on site, but parents can relax because the nanny is taking the responsibility of monitoring."

- Some resorts offer a "babe watch" service, where they'll briefly look after babies and toddlers in a shady area on the beach while parents have a stroll/swim.

- Choose sun loungers close to the children's pool or beach so you can easily watch the kids from a comfortable position, and also choose a room where you can relax outside while babies and younger children nap.

## BE REALISTIC

"Holidays with children are not the same as romantic couples getaways or trips with friends," warns Mumsnet editor Kate Williams. "The best way to truly enjoy holidays with young children is to be realistic about what's likely to make them reasonably content.

"For all but the most adventurous, this probably involves food your children will eat, a temperate climate, comfortable sleeping arrangements, a reasonable travel time and plenty of outdoorsy possibilities – in the hope that an early night for them means a couple of hours off for you."

# Never had it so good – up goes pocket money rate

CHILDREN and teenagers are in luck financially at the moment – there's been a rise in pocket money.

On average, youngsters now get £6.55 a week from their parent or guardian, marking the highest figure seen since 2007. It's also a pay rise of nearly six per cent compared with 2015, when the average weekly pocket money payout was £6.20.

More than four-fifths (81 per cent) now receive pocket money, which is also higher than the percentage in 2015.

## WHO GETS THE MOST CASH?

It appears that boys have more to celebrate than girls though.

Research among eight to 15-year-olds found on average, boys get a weekly allowance of £6.93, compared to just £6.16 for girls – with this significant pocket money gender gap making boys more than 12 per cent better off.

## Looking at how different

age groups fare, the Halifax Pocket Money Survey also found nine-year-olds get the least pocket money, at £4.68 on average, while 14-year-olds receive most, at £8.03 typically.

Parents tend to start giving out pocket money when their child is aged six to seven.

## ARE YOUNGSTERS HAPPY WITH WHAT THEY'RE GETTING?

Despite general pocket money increases, more than two-fifths (42 per cent) of children still think they should get more, although just over half of the more than 1,200 children surveyed think the amount they get's about right, and about one in five (23 per cent) believe their friends get more pocket money than they do.

The rebound in weekly pocket money payouts still has some way to go before it hits a previous record average of £8.37, reached in 2005.

## SAVE OR SPLURGE?

Giles Martin, head of Halifax Savings, says: "Pocket money is a great training tool in money management and a fantastic way of instilling a sense of the value of money from an early age. Getting children to set aside even just a small amount each week can help them to develop a strong savings habit that will serve them well through to adulthood."

According to the research, nearly four-fifths (79 per cent) of children save some of their pocket money, up 70 per cent from 2015's results.

About one in eight (12 per cent) now save all of their money, up from one in 10 last year, and nearly a third save half their money, up from a quarter in 2015. Ten-year-olds were found to be the savviest savers, with nearly nine in 10 (88 per cent) saving some or all of their pocket money. Meanwhile, 13-year-olds were least likely to save – with just over seven in 10 (71 per cent) doing so.

Parents are also doing their bit to encourage the next generation of savers. The research, which also surveyed more than 500 parents, found nine in 10 encourage their children to save some of their pocket money – while nine per cent try to encourage their children to put all the cash away.

## WILL THE MONEY IN BANKS AND BUILDING SOCIETIES STILL BE PROTECTED FOLLOWING THE VOTE TO LEAVE THE EU?

Money held in banks, building societies and credit unions is protected by a UK scheme – the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). The FSCS pays money out to customers of financial services firms when those firms go under. It has said its scope and coverage remains unchanged following the vote.

## POUNDNOTES

Financial fact: The North/South house price gap in England has widened to a record high of nearly £169,000, according to an index from Nationwide Building Society. The average house price in the North of England – which for the purposes of the report includes the Midlands as well as Yorkshire and Humberside, the North West and the North East – is £155,222. In the South of England – which includes the South West, South East, London and East Anglia – the average price of a home is £324,078.

## SCAMS AWARENESS MONTH LAUNCHED

Investment scam victims are losing £20,000 on average to frauds which may involve fake diamonds, bogus stocks and shares and fine wines that do not really exist, Citizens Advice is warning. Analysis of 5,000 scams reported to the charity between January and March 2016 showed how fraudsters are conning savers and investors out of tens of thousands of pounds. Citizens Advice and the Chartered Trading Standards Institute have launched Scams Awareness Month – a national campaign to help people avoid falling prey to scams.



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# Secret dens and sandpits will add new dimension

As the summer holidays begin, HANNAH STEPHENSON looks at installing fun play items to encourage your children into the garden, from secret dens to sandpits, and looks at plants to avoid if you have young children.

SO you've bought them the junior gardening gloves, mini-forks and little wheelbarrows to get your kids in the mood for gardening – but when all the planting's done, what's next?

Well, other enticements might include a den, tucked away from the adults, preferably in a shady part of the garden that will not suffer from high use with little ones coming in and out all the time.

To do it quickly, establish some shelter and fast-growing cover using plants such as willows. For an improvised hideaway, create a simple teepee from willow canes pushed in the ground in a circle and tied together at the top. If you want something prettier for next year, plant climbers such as clematis to climb up the canes in spring to provide flower cover.



A treehouse may be the ultimate den, but it can be costly and complicated to erect if you're not a natural DIY-er, so you may be better off letting kids make their own den.

Leave a wild area for them to roam around in, preferably towards the back of the garden, but where you can keep an eye on them, providing a variety of twiggy sticks, plants and wood and let their imagination run wild. They can make their own camps using old curtains, old sheets, blankets and pegs.

Sandpits provide young children with hours of fun, whether you buy a plastic one with a lid on it or a more permanent fixture made from a circle of logs set vertically into the ground or from a cleaned-up tractor or lorry tyre.

Use sand that is sold specifically for playpits, as it is non-toxic and won't harm children, animals, lawns or borders if accidentally spilt. Public play areas and sandpits with high use tend to replace the sand annually, but it is not always necessary to do this if you keep the pit covered when not in use.

It's worth drying it out regularly, though, as bacteria and other bugs can breed in sand that is continually wet.



Create a wildlife garden for kids. Planting should ideally be done in the spring when you can sow a wildflower meadow and feature a good variety of plants including shrubs, hedges and trees as well as winter berries. Create a bed featuring wildflowers which will grow on poor soils, including meadow clary (Salvia pratensis) and red campion (Silene dioica) along with nectar-rich open-centred flowers including poppies, cat-

mint, sedums and herbs such as lavender, mint and thyme.

Help the kids make an insect house using old pieces of bamboo cane inserted into a small wooden frame or terracotta pot, and put out bird feeders and baths, nesting boxes and hedgehog and insect houses in this new wildlife space while the kids make a log pile in which insects and mammals can shelter. Treat them to a wildlife identification guide, so they can tell you what they've seen and a pair of binoculars for a better view.

As play is likely to be at the top of a young family's agenda, play equipment such as swings and slides could be situated in their own area or integrated into the garden.

If you are creating an area for the children, there are many plants to avoid because they are either poisonous or irritate the skin. For a comprehensive list, visit [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk)

## BEST OF THE BUNCH - Escallonia

THIS compact, dense, evergreen shrub from South America is thickly clothed in aromatic, small, highly polished deep green leaves, topped by clusters of pinkish-white flowers in summer.

It's perfect for coastal gardens or as an addition to cottage and Mediterranean gardens and is a popular choice for a hedge or windbreak. E. 'Apple Blossom' is among the favourites, growing to 2.5m high and wide in a sunny spot in sheltered or exposed position. Once established it has excellent drought tolerance and requires minimum pruning. If it grows leggy, cut it back hard in spring which will promote growth.



You'll know when melons are ready because of their sweet smell

# Sensitive fruits are worth putting in the extra effort

## GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT – Melons

MELONS like to be warm and well-watered so do better in greenhouses here as they're extremely sensitive to cold and wet.

Sow seeds individually in 8cm pots in a heated propagator at 16-18C or on a warm windowsill indoors in April, pot on as necessary, staking with a cane and tying the plants in with soft twine. Keep the plants at 16C until the weather warms up and in mid to late spring plant them into large pots, soil borders or a grow bag in the greenhouse.

If you're growing them outdoors, move them outside in early summer in a warm, sunny, sheltered spot in well-drained, humus-rich soil and cover them with a cloche or cold frame. You need to pollinate those growing undercover by taking a soft artist's brush and dabbing it into the centre of all the wide open flowers in turn, to transfer pollen from the male flowers to the females.

When fruits are gooseberry size, select the best four on each stem and remove all other flowers, fruit and leaves. If you are growing

melon on a strong trellis, provide some support for the swelling fruit - a string bag or an old pair of tights supported from above will work. If you're letting the plant sprawl on the ground, place a tile or a piece of glass under each fruit to prevent rotting. You'll know when they are ready because of their sweet smell.

## WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

1. Save a few new potatoes to plant for a fresh crop at Christmas.
2. Check over large-flowered varieties of dahlia and pinch out any weak shoots.
3. Take cuttings of rock plants such as aubrieta, thyme, phlox and dianthus.
4. Buy freesia bulbs and pot them in succession through August.
5. Lift garlic bulbs, bunch loosely and hang in an airy place to dry.
6. Mow the lawn regularly, raising the height of the cutting blades in very dry weather.
7. Give roses a final feed of the year.
8. Gather aromatic leaves and flowers to dry for pot pourri.

# Foliage: the framework of our floral daydreams

## ROSS UNDERWOOD

Head Gardener at Hodnet Hall



FOR the romantic minded gardener, orchestrating a concert of summer flowers in harmonious pastel shades or a riotous contrast of fiery hues is the stuff that dreams are made of.

Yet when we pick our way between rows of tempting offerings at the garden centre how many of us stop to consider foliage in our daydreams?

The colour and shape of foliage is already setting the character and developing the background and framework of the garden. In many ways leaves are more important for the architecture of the garden than flowers. Hedges not only divide us from our neighbours but they are the canvas on which we as gardeners shape the mood of the garden. In larger gardens they subdivide the spaces within so that different areas can be manipulated according to our whim and fancy. Trees give focal points and link the garden to the surrounding countryside and a well placed evergreen can hold our interest even in the depths of winter. Let us also not forget the all important lawn. The sward can counterbalance the busiest border providing welcome rest for the eye and senses.

But within our borders we need a framework of foliage that will provide some weight and solidity and set off the flowers.

Garden fashions come and go but the importance of foliage and flowers working together was best demonstrated by the late Christopher Lloyd at his garden, Great Dixter and in his book 'The Mixed Border'.

For a statement plant with purple foliage there can be no better choice than Acer 'Bloodgood' which has the darkest purple black foliage of all the acers. It needs to be kept out of the hottest sun and most drying winds or the leaves will crinkle.

Cotinus coggygia 'Royal Purple' and Cotinus 'Grace' are never sombre and are two of my favourite purple leaved shrubs, which issue clouds of flowers that give a smoky effect. These flowers, like the rest of us grey with age but with the sun behind them they have few rivals. Charming combinations can be achieved by letting a contrasting clematis scramble through the branches.

Purple foliage can be used to great advantage on walls and other structures and the best for this job is Vitis vinifera 'Purpurea' with typical vine shaped leaves which turn a bloomy purple. Once again why not choose a companion such as a rose, to get hauled aloft with the vine.

Silver leaved plants have always proven popular especially with Mediterranean style planting schemes. Indeed there was once a lady, Mrs Desmond Underwood, who grew nothing but at her nursery. Her book, 'Grey and Silver Plants' has sadly been long out of print but it is worth getting hold of if you can find it.



Lavender is among the popular silver foliage plants and requires sharp drainage in order to flourish



The giant artichoke, Cynara cardunculus, has the largest leaves



Gold is useful in shade, especially on the ground

One of the best statement plants is the silver leaves weeping pear, Pyrus salicifolia 'Pendula' which if not over pruned billows like a sail caught by the wind. Under planted with bright bulbs such as the autumn crocus or colchicums it is a fine sight.

The giant artichoke, Cynara cardunculus has the largest leaves of all the silver foliage plants in the garden. In Victorian times the stems were balanced and eaten.

Many herbs such as a lavender have a silver colour to the foliage as does the catmint, Nepeta. Many silver foliage plants have evolved to survived an arid climate and

so require sharp drainage. Silver foliage is wonderful in the evening as are white flowers especially against the deep greens of shrubs or the blackest evening shade. In full sun the impact on the eye can be diluted.

Gold however presents itself differently, it offers a warmth reminiscent of sunshine.

Generally golden leaves plants dislike full sun so it is usually purple foliage that sets off hot colours. True gold can be hard to find and many of the best foliage plants have a touch of green. For my money Caltaipa bignonioides 'Aurea' is amongst the

best golden leaves plant for making a statement. Its new growth is purple but by the time the leaves reach their full size they are bright gold. It is not as vigorous as its purple relative but can be pruned in spring to keep it a shrub rather than a tree.

Gold is useful in shade especially on the ground where it can be as effective as a patch of true sunlight. I hope this has given you a taste for what can be explored as far as foliage colour is concerned.

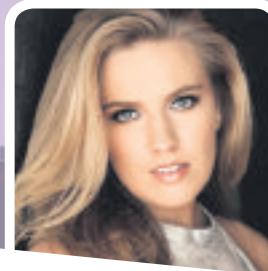
The real excitement is in planning and implementing colour combinations in your own garden.

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## Career blooms

Blossoms hit big time  
Page 25



## Sara Best in business

Page 25



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See [wolvescivic.co.uk](http://wolvescivic.co.uk)

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See [hareandhoundskingsheath.skid-netickets.com/](http://hareandhoundskingsheath.skid-netickets.com/)

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## Mr Eazi



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**Edward Gardner Conducts The National Youth Orchestra**  
Tonight at 7.30pm - 9.30pm,  
£9.50 - £25  
Symphony Hall, Birmingham,  
B1 2EA.  
Call 0121 780 3333

## CLUBBING

**Propaganda**  
Tonight - tomorrow at 10.30pm - 3.30am,  
O2 Academy Birmingham,  
B1 1DB.  
Call 0121 622 8250

## THEATRE

**Mamma Mia!**  
Tonight at 7.30pm - 10pm, tomorrow at 2.30pm - 5.30pm, Mon at 7.30pm - 10pm, Tue at 7.30pm - 10pm, Wed at 2.30pm - 5.30pm, 7.30pm - 10pm, Thu at 7.30pm - 10pm, £28 - £60  
Birmingham Hippodrome,  
B5 4TB.  
Call 0844 338 5000

## COMEDY

**Jonny Cole, Bryan Lacey and Tom Glover**  
Tonight at 8.30pm, £10  
Fitz of Laughter Comedy Club,  
Katie Fitzgerald's, Stourbridge,  
DY8 3TB.  
Call 01384 374410

**You, Me & Monkey: Absurdly Fabulous: The Improvised Episode**  
Tonight at 7.30pm,  
mac, Birmingham, B12 9QH.  
Call 0121 446 3232

**Thursday Night Comedy Carousel**  
Thu at 8pm,  
The Glee Club, Birmingham,  
B5 4TD.  
Call 0871 472 0400

**The Best In Live Stand-up Comedy**  
Tonight at 8.15pm, tomorrow at 8.15pm,  
The Glee Club, Birmingham,  
B5 4TD.  
Call 0871 472 0400

## OTHER EVENTS

**Spy School**  
Mon at 9.55am, Tue at 9.55am,  
Wed at 9.55am, Thu at 9.55am,  
Birmingham Repertory Theatre,  
B1 2EP.  
Call 0121 236 4455

**Young Artists**  
Tomorrow at 1pm - 3pm,  
Wolverhampton Art Gallery,  
WV1 1DU.  
Call 01902 552055

**Contemporary Craft Markets**  
Sun at 11am, Free  
mac, Birmingham, B12 9QH.  
Call 0121 446 3232

**Summer Holiday Family Fun**  
Tomorrow - Thu  
Cadbury World, Bourneville,  
Birmingham, B30 2LU.  
Call 0844 880 7667

**Crazy Clownfish: Talk**  
Mon at 10.45am, Tue at 10.45am,  
Wed at 10.45am, Thu at 10.45am,  
National Sea Life Centre,  
Brindleyplace, Birmingham,  
B1 2HL.  
Call 0871 423 2110

**Out'Ray'geous Rays: Talk**  
Sun at 11.30am, 1.30pm, Mon at 11.30am, 1.30pm, Tue at 11.30am, 1.30pm, Wed at 11.30am, 1.30pm,  
National Sea Life Centre,  
Brindleyplace, Birmingham,  
B1 2HL.  
Call 0871 423 2110

**Oceanic Adventures: Ocean Tunnel**  
Tomorrow at 12pm, 2pm, 4.30pm,  
Sun at 12pm, 2pm, 4.30pm, Mon at 12pm, 2pm, Wed at 12pm, 2pm, 4.30pm, Thu at 12pm, 2pm, 4.30pm,  
National Sea Life Centre,  
Brindleyplace, Birmingham,  
B1 2HL.  
Call 0871 423 2110

**Kings Heath Food Assembly**  
Tue at 7.30pm - 9pm,  
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath,  
Birmingham,  
B14 7JZ.  
Call 0844 870 0000

## GALLERIES & EXHIBITIONS

**The Festival Of Quilts**  
Thu at 10am - 5.30pm,  
The NEC Birmingham, B40 1NT.  
Call 0121 780 4141

**Land, Sea And Air**  
Tomorrow at 10am - 5pm, Sun at 12pm - 4pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,  
The New Art Gallery Walsall,  
WS2 8LG.  
Call 01922 654400

**Lucy Howard**  
Tonight at 6.30pm - 9pm,  
Tomorrow at 9.30am - 2pm,  
Tue at 9.30am - 4pm, 6.30pm - 9pm,  
Festival Drayton Centre,  
Market Drayton, TF9 3AX.  
Call 01630 654444

**Kan Xuan**  
Tomorrow at 11am - 5pm, Sun at 11am - 5pm, Tue at 11am - 5pm, Wed at 11am - 5pm, Thu at 11am - 5pm,  
Ikon Gallery, Brindleyplace,  
Birmingham, B1 2HS.  
Call 0121 248 0708

**Jesse Bruton**  
Tomorrow at 11am - 5pm, Sun at 11am - 5pm, Tue at 11am - 5pm, Wed at 11am - 5pm, Thu at 11am - 5pm,  
Ikon Gallery, Brindleyplace,  
Birmingham, B1 2HS.  
Call 0121 248 0708

**All The World's A Stage**  
Tomorrow at 11am - 5pm, Sun at 11am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,  
Barber Institute of Fine Arts,  
University of Birmingham,  
Edgbaston, B15 2TS.  
Call 0121 414 7333

**Inspire 16: The Young Creatives Of Birmingham**  
Sun at 10am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,  
Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, B3 3DH.  
Call 0121 303 1966

**A Big Bang: The Origins Of The Pop Art Collection Part 2**  
Tomorrow at 10am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,  
Wolverhampton Art Gallery,  
WV1 1DU.  
Call 01902 552055

**Tales Of The City**  
Tomorrow at 11am - 5pm, Sun at 11am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,  
Barber Institute of Fine Arts,  
University of Birmingham,  
Edgbaston, B15 2TS.  
Call 0121 414 7333

**Craft Goes Pop**  
Tomorrow at 10am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,  
Wolverhampton Art Gallery,  
WV1 1DU.  
Call 01902 552055

**The Lanchester Grand Circus**  
Tomorrow at 11am - 5pm, Sun at 11am - 5pm, Tue at 11am - 5pm, Wed at 11am - 5pm, Thu at 11am - 5pm,  
Bantock House, Wolverhampton,  
WV3 9LQ.  
Call 01902 552195

**Wildlife Photographer Of The Year 2016**  
Tomorrow at 10am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,  
Wolverhampton Art Gallery,  
WV1 1DU.  
Call 01902 552055

**Curious Beauty**  
Tomorrow at 11am - 5pm, Sun at 11am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,  
Barber Institute of Fine Arts,  
University of Birmingham,  
Edgbaston, B15 2TS.  
Call 0121 414 7333

**Turning To See: From Freud To Lucian Freud**  
Tomorrow at 10am - 5pm, Sun at 10am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,  
Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, B3 3DH.  
Call 0121 303 1966

**Birmingham People And Change In The Inner-City**  
Sun at 10am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm,  
Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, B3 3DH.  
Call 0121 303 1966

## MUSEUMS & ATTRACTIONS

**Himley Hall And Country Park**  
Tomorrow - Thu, Free  
Dudley, DY3 4DF.  
Call 01384 817817

**Blakesley Hall**  
Tomorrow at 11am - 4pm, Sun at 11am - 4pm, Tue at 11am - 4pm, Wed at 11am - 4pm, Thu at 11am - 4pm, £0 - £6  
Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RN.  
Call 0121 464 2193

**Stafford Castle**  
Tomorrow at 11am - 4pm, Sun at 11am - 4pm, Wed at 11am - 4pm, Free  
Stafford, ST16 1DJ.  
Call 01785 257698

**The Falconry Centre**  
Tomorrow at 10am - 5pm, Sun at 10am - 5pm, Mon at 10am - 5pm, Tue at 10am - 5pm, Wed at 10am - 5pm, Thu at 10am - 5pm, £3.50 - £12.50  
Hagley, DY9 0JB.  
Call 01562 700014

**The Old Guildhall Prison Cells**  
Tomorrow at 10am - 4pm,  
Guildhall, Lichfield, WS13 6LU.  
Call 01543 262223



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Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

# Headline tour as band Blossoms



Stockport's five-piece Indie band Blossoms appear in Birmingham as part of their headline autumn tour

INDIE band Blossoms have announced a headline UK tour this autumn – with a date in Birmingham on September 23.

The tour announcement comes as the Stockport quintet's self-titled debut album is released tomorrow (Friday).

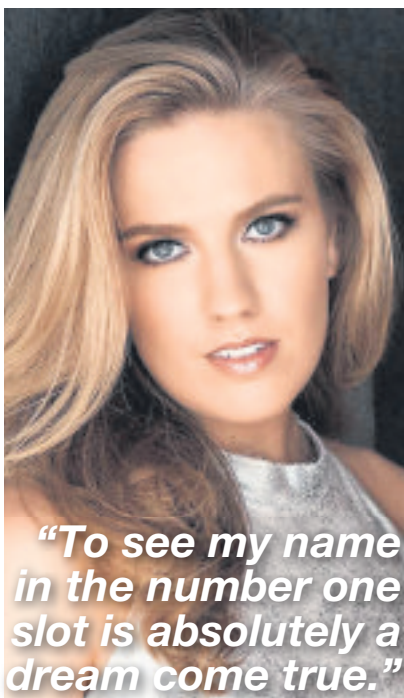
Formed in 2013, Blossoms, fronted

by Tom Ogden, also feature Charlie Salt (bass, backing vocals), Josh Dewhurst (lead guitar), Joe Donovan (drums) and Myles Kellock (keyboards) and were among the new acts featured in the BBC's Sound Of new music list for 2016.

Singles released so far include Charlemagne, At Most A Kiss and

Getaway. Blossoms also feature heavily on the festival scene this year, having already appeared at Glastonbury and T in the Park, with dates at Reading and Leeds still to come.

Blossoms appear at the O2 Institute on Friday, September 23, with tickets on sale from August 29. Support comes from Declan McKenna.



*"To see my name in the number one slot is absolutely a dream come true."*

## It's now Full Speed Ahead for SaraBeth

THE familiar saying 'Everything is bigger in Texas' comes to mind when describing powerhouse Country vocalist Sarah Elizabeth Swagers – aka SaraBeth – a native of the 'Lone Star State'.

The contemporary country singer/songwriter is making her mark in Nashville and is gaining a huge fanbase thanks to her spirited vocals and energetic live performances.

Audiences in Wolverhampton can see what all the fuss is about next week as she performs with Glenn Mitchell at the Robin 2 in Mount Pleasant, Bilston, on Tuesday, August 9, from 8pm. It is her third consecutive year of visiting the UK and she will headline a 13 city tour.

SaraBeth's current project, the EP Full Speed Ahead was released this month and debuted at number one on iTunes. It features a stellar version of the Backstreet Boys' I Want It That Way. SaraBeth said: "I don't even know what emotions I was feeling but to see my name in the number one slot is absolutely a dream come true."

Meanwhile few British people have enjoyed country music success in the way that Glenn Mitchell has.

Since moving there in 2001, he has toured with many of Nashville's finest musicians and has collected a clutch of achievements, notably best album, best song and the most nominations for the UK Country Radio Awards and has had three number one singles on the ECMA Country chart.

Tickets for the Bilston concert are £10 or £12 on the door. Call 01902 401211.

### Comedy vehicle for sharing faith

FUNNYMAN Bobby Ball will let fans in on his Christian faith next month.

Ball, better known for his Cannon & Ball partnership with Tommy Cannon, turned Christian in 1986 at the height of his professional career.

Since 1995, Ball has been using his comedic talents to share his faith at events and churches around the country.

On Saturday, September 10, he will be at Dudley Town Hall, with tickets at £10 for a 7.30pm event.

Call the box office on 01384 812812 to book, (fees apply) or visit [www.dudley.gov.uk/entertainment](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/entertainment)

### City gig follows launch of album

SONGWRITER/GUITARIST Charlie Parr performs in Birmingham next week – coinciding with the release of his new album.

Parr has joined the roster of Red House Records for his latest studio album Stumpjumper, which is being released tomorrow (Friday).

As part of his current UK headline tour, he performs at the Kitchen Garden Cafe, in Kings Heath, next Tuesday, August 9.

Tickets are £12 for an 8pm start, available from the cafe or at [www.wegotickets.com](http://www.wegotickets.com)

For more on Charlie Parr, go to <http://www.charlieparr.com>

### Summer lovin' for stage performers

TALENTED performers are hoping to get the 'You're The One That I Want' call from the theatre bosses ahead of this year's Stage Experience at Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre.

The production of Grease features gifted performers hungry for a taste of life in professional musical theatre. More than 100 youngsters will work on the production for two weeks before the curtain goes up from August 17-20. Showtimes are 7.30pm each night, with a 2.30pm final day matinee. Ticket prices range from £15 to £22.

Visit <http://www.atgtickets.com/shows/grease/new-alexandra-theatre-birmingham/>

## ASHWOOD NURSERIES

**Go Wild in the Garden...**  
and give nature a home

**1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST**  
**FUN FOR ALL THE FAMILY**  
**ADMISSION FREE**

**WHAT'S HAPPENING?**

- Wildlife Conservation in the Spotlight
- Plant Pots for Pollinators with Butterfly Conservation
- 'Let's Get Buzzing' for insect-friendly gardens
- 10% OFF all bird food & wildlife products during August\*
- A free 'wildlife' solar light is yours during 'Go Wild' in the Garden when you spend £40 on plants
- Mini Beast Nature Trail & Free Fact Sheets

(\*some exclusions may apply | \* whilst stocks last)

**SPECIAL EVENTS FOR ALL THE FAMILY!**

**SAT 6<sup>th</sup> AUGUST: Moth Morning 9am-12pm**  
showcasing the wonderful world of moths from our Wildlife Meadow with Butterfly Conservation

**TUES 16<sup>th</sup> AUGUST: Bird Ringing Demonstration**  
with the Brewood Ringers

**CHARITY GARDEN OPEN DAY**  
John's Garden & Wildlife Meadow at Ashwood Nurseries  
**SUNDAY 21<sup>st</sup> AUGUST**  
for the NATIONAL GARDENS SCHEME  
10am-4pm | **ADMISSION £5**

**Come and join us... we are situated just off the A449, 1 mile south of Wall Heath**

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Summer Opening Hours: Mon to Sat 8.30am – 5.30pm & Sundays: 9am – 5.30pm

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**'Welcome Back' Psychic Night**  
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Tuesday 23rd August 8pm

**Family Fun Day**  
Monday 29th August  
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★ Tombola Raffle  
★ Patio Sale

Brierley Hill Road, Wordsley, Stourbridge, DY8 6SP 07930 473482

**WWW.SAMSONANDLION.CO.UK**

theticket

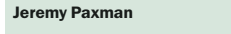
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An Express & Star supplement

**Express & Star**

## DIGITAL



**6.00 Olympics Breakfast:** 10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. 11.30 Home Cooking Made Easy. (R) 12.00 BBC News. Weather.

**6.10 Olympics 2016:** Hazel Irvine introduces the highlights of the day from the Olympic Games from Rio, featuring rowing heats, the men's cycling road race and swimming heats.

**6.00 BBC News.**

**6.10 Regional Programme.**

**6.20 Olympics 2016:** Day one in Rio continues with the conclusion of the men's cycling road race, the women's rugby sevens pool matches and the beach volleyball preliminaries. Fort Copacabana is the setting for the cycling road race, with the British riders hoping to be more successful than in the London 2012 edition. On that occasion, Mark Cavendish started as the favourite as part of a star-studded Team GB, but the rest of the field did everything possible to stop the flying Manxman from winning with gold. He eventually being won by Alexander Vinokourov of Kazakhstan. The preliminary fixtures continue at the Beach Volleyball Arena in the men's and women's disciplines, and the women's rugby sevens pool matches take place during the evening at the Deodoro Stadium, while the women's -48kg and men's -60kg judo medals are decided at 21.00 at Cariacica 2. The battle to win the first of the archery medals concludes at the Sambodromo at 21.07, featuring the bronze-medal encounter and the final of the men's team event, with South Korea expected to be among the nations involved in the latter stages. Plus, highlights of the men's artistic gymnastics qualifiers at the Rio Olympic Arena and the first-round matches at the Olympic Test Centre.

**10.16BBC News:** Weather.

**10.30 Olympics 2016:** Clare Balding and Mark Chapman introduce further live coverage from the opening day in Rio, featuring women's rugby sevens pool matches and men's artistic gymnastics qualifications.

**1.00 Olympics 2016:** Jason Mohammad introduces the final live coverage of the opening day in Rio, featuring the first four swimming finals and Great Britain v Australia in the women's 400m. National Lottery Update. 4.00 Weather.

**6.00** The Women's Football Show. (R)  
**6.30 Film:** The Silver Dancers. (1947)  
**7.55 Film:** The Happiest Days of Your Life. (1950) **9.15** Olympics 2016.  
 Another chance to see the opening ceremony of the Games of the XXXI Olympiad. (R) **12.00** The Hairy Bikers' Northern Exposure. (R) **1.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.45** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.45** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.00** The Big Bang Theory presenter: Ahead. (R) **5.20** Highlands: Scotland's Wild Heart. (R)

**6.20 Gardeners' World.** On the 20th anniversary of the death of Geoff Hamilton, Adam Frost returns to Barnsdale to pay tribute to the gardener's former presenter. Plus, tips on growing sweet peas. (R)

**6.50 Proms Extra.** Katie Derham turns attention to Mahler's Third Symphony and the David Bowie Prom, as well as Berlioz's choral symphony, Romeo and Juliet. (R)

**7.30 Full Steam Ahead.** Julia Ruth Goodman, Alex Langlands and Peter Ginn relive the golden age of steam as they explore how the Victorian railways created modern Britain. (R)

**8.30 Dad's Army.** The platoon takes part in a competition with the regular army and everything goes well – until Mainwaring assumes the role of an enemy agent on the run. (R)

**9.00 The Mystery of Van Gogh's Ear.** Jeremy Paxman and Bernadette Murphy investigate why Vincent van Gogh took a blade to his own ear in 1888, traveling across France, the Netherlands and California seeking answers. (R)

**10.00 The National Lottery Live.** The all-important numbers. (R)

**10.10 Olympics 2016.** Further coverage from the opening day in Rio. (R)

**10.30 Q+X.** Extended edition. Ross Norwood, Jonathan Lettice, Alan Davies attempt to answer host Stephen Fry's range of fiendish questions on the topic of ladies and gents. (R)

**11.15 Versailles.** The traitor strikes in the palace prison, while Henriette has her reunion with her brother, Charles II of England. Elsewhere, Beatrice risks a rendezvous with Mazarin! (R) Inside Versailles. (R)

**12.15 Film:** About a Boy. (2009) **2.10 Film:** Dracula. (1958) **3.30** This Is BBC News at Ten. (R)

**7.00** CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.00** Sooty. **7.05** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.00** Ninjago: Rise of the Snakes. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Murder. She Wrote. (R) **10.20** Murder. She Wrote. (R) **11.20** Film: *Columbo: Episode in Black*. (1972) Detected. **11.30** The World's Funniest and John Cassavetes. **1.20** ITV News. **Weather**. **1.35** Wild Animal Reunions. (R) **2.35** Doc Martin. (R) **3.40** All Star Family Fortunes. (R) **4.40** Film: *The Scorpion King*. (2002) Fantasy action adventure. **5.40** The World's Funniest and John Cassavetes. **6.15** Regional Programme. **Weather**. **6.30** ITV News. **Weather**. **6.45** **You've Been Framed!** Harry Hill narrates a comical selection of mishaps filmed by viewers, featuring a toddler destroying Stonehenge, a dubstep-loving seagull, a world's longest fart, a dog getting zapped, and baby-sitting tips from a cross-dressing dad.

**7.15** **Catchphrase**. Mandy Lillie, Matthew Newman and Nimisha Odehra set out to prove they can "see it and say it" as Stephen Mangan challenges them to guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues. After the first elimination, the two remaining players battle to reach the Super Super Super Round, where one of them will win £50,000.

**8.00** Film: **Skylark**. (2012) James Bond pursues a mysterious criminal mastermind who has orchestrated a terrorist attack on MI6 headquarters and exposed the identity of the world's most wanted agent around the world. The trail leads to a rogue former operative who has a personal vendetta against the intelligence organisation's leader. Action thriller, starring Daniel Craig and the new Ralph Fiennes.

**10.45** ITV News. **Weather**. **11.00** Film: **Carry On Girls**. (1973) A local council plans to hold a beauty contest to attract tourists, but an outraged feminist group is plotting to sabotage the event. Comedy, starring the original Carry On girls.

**12.45** **Jackpot247**. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and live cash out from the presenting team.

**3.00** Murder. She Wrote. (R) **3.50** ITV

**6.15** Shipping Wares. (R) **6.40** Gillette World Sport. **7.10** Cardiff Triforce. **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.00** The Morning Line. **10.05** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.35** The Simpsons. (R) **11.05** The Simpsons. (R) **11.35** The Simpsons. (R) **12.05** Film: City of Ember. (2008) Fantasy. **12.30** The Simpsons. (R) Roman. **2.00** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Ascot. Haydock Park and Newmarket. **4.30** Come dine with Me. **5.00** Come dine with Me. **5.30** Come dine with Me. **6.00** Come dine with Me. The final night of the competition in the Lytham St Annes and Southport area arrives, and no-nonsense Russian Tanya is the final host. However, a disastrous Russian-speaking speaker, a bad experience with the culture, and eating the vegetables look set to derail the evening.

**6.30** Channel 4 News.

**7.00** Film: Men in Black. (1997) A streetwise cop is enlisted by a top-secret government force dedicated to policing alien visitors to Earth. The cop, with a partner, an agent just as a body-swapping extraterrestrial giant insect begins a reign of terror throughout New York City. Sci-fi comedy, starring Will Smith, Tommy Lee Jones, Linda Fiorentino, Rip Torn and Vincent D'Onofrio.

**9.00** Film: Super 8. (2011) Premiere. A boy and his friends sneak out at night to film an amateur zombie movie, only to witness a train wreck. As people start disappearing from their town and the military descends in force, they come to realise a dangerous alien was being transported on the train and is now on the loose. Sci-fi thriller. Starring Joe Courtney and Elle Fanning.

**11.15** Film: Trance. (2013) A hypnotist helps an amnesiac art dealer remember where he hid a painting stolen from his own auction house. Crime thriller, starring James McAvoy and Rosario Dawson.

**1.10** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA. (R) **2.05** Hollywood. Omnibus. The police arrest Mac. (R) **4.10** Kirstie's Fill Your House for Free. (R) **4.25** Location, Location, Location. (R) **5.20** Double Your

**6.00** Milkshake! **8.25** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles! (R) **9.00** The Saturday Show Live. **11.00** Funniest Fails, Falls & Flows. **11.30** The Nightmare Neighbour (R) **12.15** The Nightmare Neighbour (R) **12.30** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **1.00** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **2.20** Police Interceptors. (R) **3.20** Police Interceptors. (R) **4.20** Police Interceptors. (R) **5.15** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! (R)

**6.10** **Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** Agents Paul and Phil head to Kent for an eviction and discover a full-scale cannabis factory upstairs. Plus, Brian and Delroy chase a debt of nearly £3,000 in Hampshire. (R)

**7.00** **Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away.** England v Pakistan. Mark Nicholas presents action from day four of the Third Test in the four-match series, which took place at Edgbaston. With commentary and analysis from Geoffrey Boycott, Michael Vaughan and Simon Hughes. (R)

**8.00** **NCIS.** Gibbs and the team investigate the death of a Navy lieutenant commander's husband, while Tony's father visits for Christmas. Guest starring Robert Wagner. (R)

**8.55** **New Weekend.**

**9.00** **Football on The Championship.** New series. George Riley and Lynsey Higrave introduce highlights from the opening weekend's games in the Championship, including Fulham v Newcastle United from Friday night. (R)

**10.00** **Football on 5: Goal Rush.** New series. George Riley and Lynsey Higrave introduce all the goals from the opening weekend's games in the Leagues One and Two. (R)

**10.30** **Football Big Brother.** Highlights of the famous housemates' past 24 hours under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, as they try to get used to living alongside one another. (R)

**11.35** **Impractical Jokers UK.** Four friends compete in a series of challenges, and in the first task have to add as many scoops of peas as they can to other diners' plates. (R)

**12.05** **SuperCasino.** **3.10** **Celebrity Big Brother.** (R) **4.00** **Girls:** Behind Closed Doors. (R) **4.50** **Divine Designs.** (R) **5.15**

**BBC Four**  
**1.00** Olympics 2016 **2.00** Britain on Film:  
 A Woman's Place **3.30** Danny Baker  
 Rocks the Nineties (A Bit) **3.30** New York  
 Rock at the BBC **4.00** Close  
**ITV2**  
**11.30** Ninja Warrior **UK 12.30** You've  
 Been Framed! **Gold 1.05** Film: Must Love  
 Dogs (2005) **2.05** FYI Daily **2.10** Film:  
 Must Love Dogs (2005) **3.00** Film:  
 Stormbreaker (2006) **4.00** FYI Daily **4.05**  
 Film: Stormbreaker (2006) **4.55** Film:  
 Yogi Berra (2010) **5.55** FYI Daily **6.00** Film:  
 25 Ashes (2007) **6.35** Film:  
 Twilight (2008) **7.35** FYI Daily **7.40** Film:  
 Twilight (2008) **9.00** Film: Hot Fuzz  
 (2007) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10** Film: Hot  
 Fuzz (2007) **11.25** Family Guy **12.55**  
 American Dad! **1.50** The Cleveland  
 Show (2009) **2.55** The Cleveland Show  
 (2009) **3.55** ITV2 Nightseries  
**ITV3**  
**12.45** Asha Bha Christie's Marple **2.50**  
 Film: The Pure Hell of St Trinian's (1960)  
**3.50** FYI Daily **3.55** Film: The Pure Hell  
 of St Trinian's (1960) **4.55** Midsummer  
 Murders (2006) **5.00** Martin Lewis  
 10.10.10: Top of the Pops **12.10** Inspector  
 Morse **2.15** ITV3 Nightseries **2.30**  
 Teleshopping  
**ITV4**  
**11.30** Film: The Land That Time Forgot  
 (1975) **12.35** FYI Daily **12.45** Film:  
 The Land That Time Forgot (1975) **1.20** Film:  
 The Smiths (2006) **2.25** FYI Daily **2.30**  
 Film: Nevada Smith (2006) **3.40** British  
 Touring Car Championship Highlights  
**3.50** Storage Wars **6.00** The Motorbike  
 Show **7.00** TT Blues **8.00** Film: Space  
 Cowboys (2000) **9.05** FYI Daily **9.10**  
 Film: The Motorbike Show **10.40** FYI  
 Daily: Ransome (1996) **11.40** FYI Daily  
**11.55** Film: Ransome (1996) **1.55** Minder  
**2.05** Andy Cole: Sports Life Stories **3.30**  
 Teleshopping  
**E4**  
**11.30** Rich Kids of Instagram **2.30** New  
 Girl **1.40** The Goldbergs **3.30** Brooklyn  
 Nine-Nine **4.00** Film: The Gold Rush  
 Compass (2007) **6.10** Rude(ish) Tube  
 Shorts **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00**  
 Film: The Five-Year Engagement (2012)  
**11.30** Gogglebox **1.40** First Dates **2.40**  
 Film: The Five-Year Engagement **4.15** How I Met  
 Your Mother **4.35** Chavarna  
**Rude Tube**  
**1.00** The Chronicles of Narnia: The  
 Voyage of the Dawn Treader (2010) **3.15**  
 Stuart Little (1999) **4.55** Cheaper By  
 The Dozen (2003) **6.50** Mission: Impossible  
 (1996) **9.00** The Transporter (2002)  
**10.45** Die Hard (1988) **1.20** 13 Assassins



*Winter Wedding Fair* Sunday 20th November 2016  
11.00am - 4.00pm

# Wolverhampton Magazine Wedding Fair

The Wolverhampton Magazine's Winter Wedding Fair held at Ramada Park Hall Hotel & Spa will fill you with festive inspiration this November.

This event to be held on  
Sunday 20th November  
promises to be full of ideas  
for your forthcoming nuptials

There will be over 30 exhibitors at the event to help you plan your perfect day!

There will be specialists covering all aspects of your wedding day, so don't miss out – come along and join us at our fair.

It's a huge trend for brides and grooms to customise all aspects of their big day, down to the very last detail and, with some great exhibitors our wedding fair will offer plenty to inspire.

Nowadays, there are so many ways to personalise your event, from unique bridal bouquets which include flowers from your garden-to monogrammed favours and place settings. A popular trend is to include



family photos and mementoes  
to bring loved ones closer on  
your special day.

It's all about creating a wedding that reflects your personality and tastes, while at the same time introducing an extra element of fun to the day.

**Anyone interested in exhibiting at the fair can call the organisers Deana Jones on 01902 319693 or Leah Edmunds on 01902 319619.**

CHOICE



**Dragons' Den (BBC2, 9pm)**  
Evan Davis presents the business ideas contest, as regular panelists Peter Jones, Deborah Meaden, Touker Suleyman, Sarah Willingham and Nick Jenkins assess the profit-making potential of a brand of pork scratchings and a device for folding paper. The entrepreneurs behind a fledgling fashion business also try their luck, but textile tycoon Touker is far from impressed.

BBC1

**6.00** Olympic Breakfast. **9.00** BBC News. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **12.45** BBC News; Weather. **1.00** Olympics 2016. Coverage of day two in Rio gets under way.  
**6.00** BBC News.  
**6.20** Regional Programme.  
**6.30** **Countryfile**. Anita Rani reports from Kerraera, a tiny island in the Scottish Inner Hebrides, close to the town of Oban, which in the last census had a population of just 34. Anita spends a day getting to know the locals, joining postmaster Gill Vollum on her rounds and helping shepherd Sheila McGregor to bring in her sheep. She also talks to Aiden Gallagher and Martin Shields to find out why they quit busy jobs on the mainland to live the island dream.  
**7.30** **Olympics 2016**. Day two in Rio continues with the conclusion of the women's cycling road race at Fort Copacabana and the women's rugby sevens quarter-finals at the Deodoro Stadium. Selection this year for the cycling places in Team GB has proven somewhat controversial, but the squad of Lizzie Armitstead, Emma Pooley and Nikki Harris is one of the most experienced ones at the Games, and Armitstead will be hoping to go one better than at London 2012, when she finished second behind Marianne Vos. Only four sides were eliminated at the group stage of the women's rugby, so Great Britain will expect to be involved, but picking a winner of the tournament is difficult, as the sport of rugby returns to the Olympic fold for the first time since 1924. Plus, a round-up of the rest of the day's action, including the women's artistic gymnastics qualifiers.  
**10.00** BBC News.  
**10.20** Regional Programme.  
**10.30** **Match of the Day: Community Shield Highlights**. Leicester City v Manchester United. Action from the curtain-raiser to the English top-flight campaign, as the Premier League champions faced the FA Cup-winners at Wembley Stadium.  
**11.15** **Olympics 2016**. The latest coverage from day two in Rio.  
**1.00** Olympics 2016. **4.00** Weather for the Week Ahead. **4.05** BBC News.

BBC2

**6.15** **Countryfile**. (R) **7.15** The Beechgrove Garden. **7.45** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. (R) **9.15** Olympics: Rio Highlights 2016. Highlights of the opening day of the Olympic Games from Rio. **1.00** Film: The Third Man. (1949) Thriller, starring Joseph Cotten and Orson Welles. **2.40** Escape to the Continent. (R) **3.40** Flog It! (R) **4.25** Songs of Praise. (R) **5.00** New Zealand: Earth's Mythical Islands. (R)  
**6.00** **Olympics 2016**. Day two of the Games in Rio continues with the latest swimming heats at the Olympic Aquatics Stadium and the women's cycling road race from Fort Copacabana. The cycling is heading towards a conclusion, while the swimming includes the heats of the men's 100m backstroke at 18.17 and women's 400m freestyle at 18.37, which will feature American star Katie Ledecky. Hazel Irvine presents.  
**7.30** **Wallace & Gromit: A Close Shave**. Nick Park's animated characters embark on their third adventure, which sees Wallace fall in love and Gromit framed for sheep rustling. With the voices of Peter Sallis and Anne Reid. (R)  
**8.00** **Robot Wars**. Dara O Briain and Angela Scanlon present more battles in the arena, including a robot designed by a nine-year-old girl, which comes complete with a huge pink axe. Other entrants include a team of students from Falkirk whose robot is made of wood and has a petrol engine, and a family team with an ingenious creation made up of parts sourced from their local scrapyard.  
**9.00** **Dragons' Den**. The panel assesses the profit-making potential of a fledgling fashion business, a brand of pork scratchings and a device for folding paper. Presented by Evan Davis.  
**10.00** **Olympics 2016**. Coverage of day two continues with the men's hockey group match between Great Britain and New Zealand and the quarter-finals of the women's rugby sevens. Presented by Clare Balding.  
**11.15** **Film: Youth in Revolt**. (2009) An awkward 16-year-old meets the girl of his dreams on holiday and embarks on a series of elaborate misadventures to be with her. Comedy, starring Michael Cera.  
**12.40** Sign Zone: **Countryfile**. (R) **1.35** Holby City. (R) **2.40** This is BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00** CITY: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.00** Sooty. (R) **7.15** Super 4. (R) **7.35** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.00** Ninjago: Rise of the Snakes. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **10.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.25** Film: Columbo: Negative Reaction. (1974) Detective drama, starring Peter Falk. **1.20** ITV News: Weather. **1.25** Long Lost Family. (R) **2.30** Love Your Garden. (R) **3.30** Film: The Queen. (2006) Oscar-winning biographical drama, starring Helen Mirren. **5.30** Masterpiece with Alan Titchmarsh. (R)  
**6.30** Regional Programme; Weather.  
**6.45** **ITV News**: Weather.  
**7.00** **The Zoo**. An insight into the daily life for the staff and animals at London Zoo in Regent's Park and its country home at Whipsnade, where 800 keepers tend 21,000 creatures. The series reveals what it means to be part of ZSL's dedicated team, including some of the world's best vets. (R)  
**8.00** **Midsomer Murders**. When wealthy landowner Gregory Lancaster's body goes missing on the night of his death, a sinister web of secrets and lies is exposed in the village of Little Malton. As DCI Barnaby, DS Nelson and new forensic pathologist Kam Karimov investigate the mysterious crime, they find themselves drawn into a macabre world of body-snatching during their quest to identify the perpetrator. Detective drama, starring Neil Dudgeon, Gwilym Lee, Manjinder Virk, Helen Bayxendale and Navin Chowdhry. (R)  
**10.00** **ITV News**: Weather.  
**10.15** **Slow Train Through Africa with Griff Rhys Jones**. Griff travels across Namibia in the south-west, experiencing luxury camping, encountering cheetahs, and visiting 1,000-foot sand dunes. (R)  
**11.15** **Premiership Rugby 7s Highlights**. Action from the finals day at The Ricoh Arena in Coventry, which featured eight teams in two pools of four, with the two teams that topped the tables competing in the final.  
**12.15** Jackpot247. Interactive gaming. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.30** ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

**6.15** Shipping Wars. (R) **6.40** Mobil 1 The Grid. **7.05** Motor Sport: Chateau Impney Hill Climb. **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Film: The Great Mouse Detective. (1986) Animated adventure, with the voice of Vincent Price. **2.00** The Simpsons: Homer Day. (R) **2.25** The Simpsons: Homer Day. (R) **2.55** The Simpsons: Homer Day. (R) **3.25** The Simpsons: Homer Day. (R) **3.55** The Simpsons: Homer Day. (R) **4.25** The Simpsons: Homer Day. (R) **4.55** The Simpsons: Homer Day. (R) **5.25** The Simpsons: Homer Day. (R) **5.50** Channel 4 News.  
**6.15** **Film: Monsters, Inc.** (2001) Two monsters work for an energy firm that employs scary creatures to sneak into children's bedrooms and convert their screams into power. However, when a little girl accidentally wanders into the pair's domain, they have to race against time to return her safely home before anyone finds out. Pixar animated comedy, with the voice of John Goodman.  
**8.00** **Flying to the Ends of the Earth**. Arthur Williams flies to the islands of the South Pacific and meets Tracey Johnson, who has turned the luxury retreat of Wadigi into a bolthole for celebrities and the super-rich. He also visits the islands of Vanuatu, where he meets flying doctor Mark Turnbull, who takes him up in his plane on his daily rounds – to the island of Mota, where Arthur is roped in to a spot of bush dentistry, pulling teeth without anaesthetic. Finally, Arthur takes his life in his hands as he attempts to land on the slopes of an active volcano on the island of Tanna.  
**9.00** **Film: 47 Ronin**. (2013) Premiere. A band of samurai is betrayed by a ruthless warlord who murders the warriors' master and banishes them from their homeland. They receive fresh hope in the shape of a mysterious former slave, who leads them into battle against monstrous and magical enemies as they seek to reclaim their former status. Fantasy adventure, starring Keanu Reeves.  
**11.20** **Film: Ghost**. (1990)  
**1.40** Friday Night Dinner. (R) **2.10** The World's Weirdest Weather. (R) **3.05** Walking the Himalayas. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Bob the Builder. (R) **6.40** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.50** Zack and Quack. (R) **7.05** Pets. (R) **7.10** Noddy in Toyland. (R) **7.20** Paw Patrol. **7.35** Little Princess. (R) **7.50** Pip Ahoy! (R) **8.10** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.35** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.50** Shimmer and Shine. **9.15** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.30** LazyTown. (R) **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.30** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.30** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **12.00** Now That's Funny! (R) **1.00** Benefits House: Me & My 26 Kids. (R) **2.00** Benefits, Babies & Jail. (R) **3.00** Benefits: Can't Work, Won't Work. (R) **4.00** Benefits: 19 Kids and Counting the Cost. (R) **5.00** Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud 3. (R)  
**6.00** **Now That's Funny!** Featuring animals behaving badly, lucky beginners, and a couple driving down a steep mountain.  
**6.55** **5 News Weekend**.  
**7.00** **Cricket on 5**. England v Pakistan. Mark Nicholas presents action from day five of the Third Test in the four-match series, which took place at Edgbaston. With commentary and analysis from Geoffrey Boycott.  
**8.00** **Toddlers Make You Laugh Out Loud**. Internet video clips of youngsters doing bizarre and humorous things, including a six-year-old performing Aretha Franklin's Respect. (R)  
**8.55** **5 News Weekend**.  
**9.00** **Celebrity Big Brother**. The ups and downs of life in the BB house as friendships and alliances are made, battle lines are drawn and arguments erupt.  
**10.00** **Bankrupt & Broke: When Celebs Go Bust**. Countdown show exploring how a celebrity lifestyle led to bankruptcy for a number of famous faces, with accounts from friends and colleagues of how they squandered their fortunes. (R)  
**11.30** **Body Freaks: Old Face, New Face**. Documentary following people who have had extreme cosmetic transformations, including a sales assistant who spent £100,000 to look like his idol, Kim Kardashian. (R)  
**12.30** Lip Sync Battle. **12.55** SuperCasino. **3.10** Now That's Funny! (R) **4.00** World's Most Pampered Pets. (R) **4.45** Wildlife SOS. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Four**  
**1.00** Olympics 2016 **2.00** Britain on Film: Brits at Play **2.30** Sounds of the Sixties **3.00** Timeshift: The Nation's Railway: The Golden Age of British Rail **4.00** Close  
**ITV2**  
**12.20** Take Me Out **1.20** Funniest Ever You've Been Framed! **2.20** You've Been Framed! **3.00** Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **3.50** FYI Daily **3.55** Film: Mr Bean's Holiday (2007) **4.40** Film: The Smurfs (2011) **5.40** FYI Daily **5.45** Film: The Smurfs (2011) **6.45** Film: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) **7.45** FYI Daily **7.50** Film: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (2012) **10.00** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.25** Bordertown **12.55** The Cleveland Show **1.50** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.15** Teleshopping **5.45** ITV2 Nightscreen  
**ITV3**  
**11.40** A Touch of Frost **1.55** Goodbye Mr Chips **4.00** Film: Carry On Up the Jungle (1970) **5.00** FYI Daily **5.05** Film: Carry On Up the Jungle (1970) **5.55** Doc Martin **8.00** Royal Stories **9.00** Million Dollar Princesses **10.00** The Booze Cruise III **12.05** Wire in the Blood **1.35** May the Best House Win **4.40** Rising Damp **5.30** ITV3 Nightscreen  
**ITV4**  
**11.00** Film: Captain Newman MD (1964) **12.30** Film: Dunkirk (1958) **1.40** FYI Daily **1.45** Film: Dunkirk (1958) **3.15** Film: Nevada Smith (1966) **4.20** FYI Daily **4.25** Film: Nevada Smith (1966) **5.55** Mr Bean? **7.00** Prawn Stars **8.00** Film: Cannonball Run II (1984) **9.05** FYI Daily **9.10** Film: Cannonball Run II (1984) **10.15** Film: Raw Deal (1986) **11.15** FYI Daily **11.20** Film: Raw Deal (1986) **12.25** Film: Nighthawks (1981) **1.25** FYI Daily **1.30** Film: Nighthawks (1981) **2.25** Nitro Circus **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping  
**E4**  
**12.00** Coach Trip: Road to Ibiza **2.35** The Goldbergs **4.30** Film: Step Up (2006) **6.35** The Big Bang Theory **10.00** Tattoo Fixers on Holiday **11.00** Rich Kids of Instagram **12.00** Gogglebox **1.05** Containment **2.05** Rude Tube **3.00** 2 Broke Girls **3.40** Hollyoaks  
**Film4**  
**11.00** St Trinian's (2007) **1.00** The Core (2003) **3.50** The Tale of the Princess Kaguya (2013) **6.40** Mission: Impossible 2 (2000) **9.00** Die Hard 2 (1990) **11.20** Zero Dark Thirty (2012) **2.25** Apartment 143 (2011) **4.00** Close

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## FILM CHOICES

### WEDNESDAY

#### The Reckoning, Channel 5, 3.15pm

Having left behind the Amish life of her youth for the modern world, a woman must now come to terms with her heritage and the man she once loved. Romantic drama, starring Katie Leclerc, Chad Connell and Jacob Blair. (2015)

#### Don't Be Afraid of the Dark, Channel 4, 12.35am

A girl moves into a gothic mansion with her father and his new girlfriend, and hears strange noises coming from the basement. Her curiosity leads her to unwittingly unleash a swarm of voracious tiny monsters, but her attempts to warn her family of the terrible danger they are in fall on deaf ears. Horror, with Bailee Madison, Guy Pearce and Katie Holmes. (2010)

### THURSDAY

#### Guilty Until Proven Innocent: Garage Sale Mystery, Channel 5, 3.15pm

Antiques expert – and amateur detective Jennifer Shannon puts her sleuthing skills to the test once more when an old friend from college becomes the prime suspect in a murder investigation. Crime drama, starring Lori Loughlin, Lindsay Maxwell. (2016)



**A Fish Called Wanda, Friday, ITV, 10.40pm**

### FRIDAY

#### A Fish Called Wanda, ITV, 10.40pm

A stuffy English barrister representing a jewel thief is targeted by his client's partners in crime – a seductive American crook and her dim-witted would-be philosopher lover who will go to any lengths to discover where the diamonds from their last heist have been hidden. Crime comedy, starring John Cleese, Jamie Lee Curtis, Kevin Kline, Michael Palin and Tom Georgeson. (1988)

#### Flying Blind, BBC2, 11.10pm

An aerospace engineer designing military drones begins a passionate affair with a younger Muslim student. The relationship leads to her being questioned by the security services, who claim he is involved in terrorism, forcing her to question how much she knows about her lover and where her loyalties lie. Drama, starring Helen McCrory, Najib Oudghiri, Kenneth Cranham, Tristan Gemmill, Lorcan Cranitch and Razane Jammal. (2012)

# Tears all round as they meet the parents

**H**ankies at the ready everyone – there are two more unbearably moving tales heading your way this week.

The first of them focuses on David Smith, who lives in Cambridgeshire with his wife and two children. He's close to his offspring, and says, "I don't think you understand the love of a father until you become a father yourself."

David was raised by his mother and her husband alongside two siblings. However, he didn't bond with the man he thought was his dad, and discovered in his teens, following his mother's divorce, that his biological father was a man called Ken Davis, whom she'd met and fallen in love with. However, following a heated argument, they went their separate ways.

For years, David has longed for a father figure: "I want someone to be proud of me, someone to say, 'this is my son'."

The programme's researchers stepped in to lend him a hand. They discovered that Ken is now married

with three more children and living in West Bromwich.

When co-host Nicky Campbell catches up with him, Ken reveals he's always been aware of David's existence and had wanted to be a part of his life, but felt that when his mother married, that he'd be better off as part of their family unit; he's devastated to find that David's childhood wasn't a happy one and regrets his decision.

After seeing a picture of him, Ken agrees to meet his son for the first time – and it's a life-changing moment for both of them that won't leave a dry eye anywhere.

The second story is perhaps even more remarkable. It focuses on Mandy Hearn, who was adopted as a baby and grew up by loving parents. However, she claims she always felt different so, 30 years ago, when she was 18, she decided to investigate in an attempt to understand why her birth mother had given her up – and what she found out shocked her.

Mandy is the offspring of Pamela, who had her when she was just 13 years of age. "She was a child herself,"

remarks Mandy, who was deeply affected by this revelation. "It's shocking when you see how young she was. She must have been terrified."

Initially, she called off her search, concerned that if Pamela had gone on to have another family, it might be too upsetting for both them and her to disturb their happiness. But now, she feels the need to get to know her better.

Campbell visits Pamela at her home in Co Mayo on Ireland's west coast. She reveals that at the time of her pregnancy, she had little support and despite feeling a bond with her daughter, felt she had no choice but to give her up. "I was doing someone a good turn, making family for other people," she explains.

Davina McCall accompanies the women when they come face-to-face in Richmond, not far from where they were last together almost 50 years ago.

"It is a great feeling to know that she's well and she knows that I am okay," says Mandy."



**Davina McCall and Nicky Campbell present Long Lost Family, Wednesday, ITV, 9pm**

# BEST OF THE REST

### MONDAY

#### Brief Encounters

##### ITV, 9pm

Steph organises an exotic lingerie event at a local nightclub, but things are unlikely to run smoothly. Brian is stunned when Dawn tells him she has asked Russell to model, Steph confronts Pauline and asks why she lied to Johnny, while Barry shows Terry he knows the truth about him and Lisa. On the evening of the show, Pauline approaches Nita and gives her shocking news that leaves all the women astounded. Drama, starring Penelope Wilton and Sophie Rundle. Last in the series.

#### Naked Attraction

##### Channel 4, 10pm

If you've missed the first two episodes of this controversial series, it's the show that literally strips the dating process bare. Each week, two singletons get the chance to choose a date from six naked candidates, who are revealed to them one body part at a time. The decisions are made based on pure physical attraction, but will that prove to be a better indicator of compatibility than making small talk in a pub or exchanging text messages? The latest people to put it to the test are Matthew, a 24-year-old mobile sales advisor, and Tracy, who has been out of the dating game for three years.

### TUESDAY

#### First Dates

##### Channel 4, 10pm

New series. Podiatrist Felicity meets handsome city boy Jethro, who describes himself as 'marmite', while 24-year-old Irishman Damian believes his Tourette's is the reason he has yet to find the man of his dreams. He goes on a date with part-time model Kai, who is a sucker for an Irish accent. Meanwhile, 79-year-old history student Joe has a poignant and cheeky date with Dee, boat builder Abbey swaps her overalls for a dress in a bid to win the heart of special effects technicians James, and accountant Ajai meets his date Hema.

### WEDNESDAY

#### Inside CERN: A Horizon Special

##### BBC2, 8pm

The BBC's flagship science programme turns its attention to one of the most extraordinary stories in particle physics. It begins in June 2015, when teams at CERN started running the Large Hadron Collider at the highest energy possible. Before long, rumours began to emerge that they were on the brink of a huge discovery, thanks to a mysterious bump in some data suggesting a first glimpse of a brand new

particle. If you're not sure why that's so exciting, it could change our understanding of the universe and also hints at extra dimensions – but there is a possibility that the data bump was caused by noise from the machine. Horizon follows the scientists as they look for the signals that would determine one way or the other whether there really is a new particle.

### THURSDAY

#### The Supervet: Bionic Specials

##### Channel 4, 8pm

New series. The return of the documentary about a pioneering veterinary practice, delving deeper into the science behind the cutting-edge procedures used by Professor Noel Fitzpatrick and his staff. Noel tries to cure a terrier's limp by performing an elbow replacement – using a 3D-printed hinged joint.



**Brief Encounters, Monday, ITV, 9pm**

### FRIDAY

#### Amazing Spaces Shed of the Year

##### Channel 4, 8pm

The 2016 competition arrives at its half-way point, with the turn of the most popular category - Pubs and Entertainment sheds. This fiercely contested group includes an entire Wild West town built out of sheds up in Aberdeen, a faithful replica of a Polish mountain drinking den in rural Ireland, and a nightclub in a Hackney with a truly one-of-a-kind owner. Meanwhile, among the shortlisted sheds in the Workshops and Studios group are a blacksmith's smithy and Star Wars shed.

#### Friday Night Dinner

##### Channel 4, 10pm

Unlike most episodes of this laugh-out-loud comedy, Adam (Simon Bird) doesn't just turn up at mum and dad's for dinner tonight – he's already there. The Goodman son has been staying at his parents' place all week, and with Mum (Tamsin Greig) fussing over him so much, he's regressed into behaving like a child – well, even more than usual. But one staple of this comedy is that the family quartet won't actually get the chance to enjoy their dinner, as something or someone is bound to turn up to sabotage it. This week it is neighbour Jim (Mark Heap), who is terrified of his own dog.

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BRAIN GYM No.389

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.

4	6	16	17	25	7	4	16	1	22
13	17	5	15	25	25	1	23	11	
26	7	3	26	2	15	12	1	23	11
18	17	12	6				2	24	
		1	6	19	3	11	19	25	7
17	9	15	16	6	10	15	15	17	
4	7		14	17	24		6	2	
15	8		26	19	14	15	26	26	24
20	3	25	21	1	26	25	8	16	
3	16	3			6	1	17	22	
17	16	8	6	26	17	7	5	17	8
26	11		11	13		26	25	7	12
15	11	15	9	15	7	26	10	5	15

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

S	T	B	E	R	J	Y	W	N	O	A	D	P
X	V	U	K	G	L	M	H	F	I	C	Z	Q

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 1. Shipping trade (5)
- 4. Take a trip (7)
- 8. Where to see women in retreat (7)
- 9. Finishing off a cake? (5)
- 10. Birds slow to change (4)
- 11. He could be grounded and in trouble (8)
- 13. Assemble in the mother ship (4)
- 14. Part of a business house reserved for the employer (4)
- 16. Dismissed just for being unqualified (8)
- 17. Form of transport levy that's imposed on one (4)
- 20. Country taking in reciprocal aid (5)
- 21. Eggs turn into cheers (7)
- 22. Objectives a sailor acquires (7)
- 23. Support for the board (5)

Down

- 1. Twister making an honest living (13)
- 2. Abolish article from a year-book (5)
- 3. A row in the amphitheatre (4)
- 4. Uttering an adage (6)
- 5. All that is sure, perhaps, about a tangled vine (8)
- 6. He may put up a house for sale (7)
- 7. Continuous bleep or a ring, perhaps (7,6)
- 12. Reckon I'm splitting the estate (8)
- 13. He produces his pass when he's being charged (7)
- 15. Photographs new plants (6)
- 18. Make staid entrances (5)
- 19. We hold a note for payment (4)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8						
10						
16						
20						
22						

Quick Clues:

Across

- 1. Criminal (5)
- 4. Send away (7)
- 8. Uproar (7)
- 9. Ape (5)
- 10. Eager (4)
- 11. Repeat (8)
- 13. Melody (4)
- 14. Faithful (4)
- 16. Praiseworthy (8)
- 17. Labyrinth (4)
- 20. Moribund (5)
- 21. Raise (7)
- 22. Farthest (7)
- 23. Clothe (5)

Down

- 1. Prescience (13)
- 2. Profit (5)
- 3. Artless (4)
- 4. Moved to music (6)
- 5. Congruity (8)
- 6. Duck (7)
- 7. Reticence (13)
- 12. Interweave (8)
- 13. Sightseer (7)
- 15. Adduce (6)
- 18. Vigilant (5)
- 19. Repair (4)

Sudoku

1	5	9			2	
	2	5	1	6		
8		7				1
		3		8		
2		9	4	7		5
	5			7		
4		2			2	6
	1			6	5	3

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

4	1	9	3	2	5	8	6	7
3	7	8	6	1	4	5	9	2
5	2	6	9	7	1	4	3	8
9	8	2	7	5	6	4	3	1
6	5	4	2	3	1	7	8	9
7	3	1	9	4	8	2	5	6
8	6	7	5	9	2	3	1	4
2	4	5	1	6	3	9	7	8
1	9	3	4	8	7	6	2	5

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 3 Impostors; 8 Term; 9 Comes into; 10 Number; 11 Named; 14 Paste; 15 Damp; 16 Sight; 18 Punt; 20 Angle; 21 Gross; 24 Snow; 25 Manifesto; 26 Dual; 27 Programme. Down: 1 Stand-pipe; 2 Promising; 4 Moor; 5 Omega; 6 Tailed; 7 Rate; 9 Ceres; 11 Negus; 12 Dangerous; 13 Speedwell; 17 Taboo; 19 Trying; 22 Slenia; 23 Pair; 24 Stem. QUICK - Across: 3 Qualified; 8 Nail; 9 Castigate; 10 Occurs; 11 Fears; 14 Reals; 15 Echo; 16 Smash; 18 Chic; 20 Apple; 21 Table; 24 Strict; 25 Nonentity; 26 Hall; 27 Persisted. Down: 1 Incorrect; 2 Discredit; 4 Upps; 5 Lith; 6 Figure; 7 Eats; 9 Cross; 11 Flame; 12 Sceptical; 13 Forestall; 17 Hasty; 19 Caress; 22 Lotus; 23 Core; 24 Style.

Thinking space

Quiz

- 1. Which Native American woman is said to have saved the life of Captain John Smith?
- 2. What type of animal is an ibex?
- 3. Which are the only two planets in our solar system not to have moons?
- 4. Which British film-maker directed the film This Sporting Life?
- 5. Which element has the symbol P?
- 6. Within which group of islands is Scapa Flow?
- 7. Whose sidekick was Violet Elizabeth Bott?
- 8. To whom is the Greek epic poem The Odyssey attributed?
- 9. In which country is the Seikan Tunnel, the world's largest underwater tunnel?
- 10. For which party was Emmeline Pankhurst a prospective parliamentary candidate?

Last week's solutions:

- Quiz: 1 Mormons; 2 Robert Thomson; 3 Cuckoo; 4 Ricky Ponting; 5 Urticaria; 6 Kiev; 7 Aster; 8 French; 9 Polecat; 10 Orange.

Niner: EMULATING

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

- 23718 gives a girl's name,
- 94926 gives a second girl's name,
- 258372 gives a third girl's name.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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Pho-nomenal food – the hearty chicken salad was the star of the show



Streets ahead – Pho offers Vietnamese food

# Just the ticket! Why this type of food is right up my street

IT wasn't that long ago when a meal at the train station meant a Double Whopper with chips, some onion rings and an unnecessarily large diet Coke.

The choice of seating was either the sole plastic backless chair or the middle of the platform.

But that's now a distant memory, the future is here and it's sensational – welcome to Grand Central Birmingham which opened last September and has been a huge success in both visitor numbers and positive feedback.

Located on the first floor, Grand Central has given the green light to a diverse number of restaurants from French to Japanese. With my wife being half Filipino, we decided to stay in the Far East and dine at Pho. No that's not a spelling error, the

Nathan Judah tucks in

name may be short and slightly odd, but the experience from start to finish was quite simply a delight.

Pho is an open plan Vietnamese restaurant that delivers quick, healthy 'street food' at a very reasonable price. So what is the meaning behind the name? Quite simply it's the star dish that the restaurant serves – a traditional noodle soup.

The menu is clear, well described and extensive. And if you can't read Vietnamese, the English explanation is quoted just below each dish to help out even the most confused customer.

The staff are incredibly attentive and when I eat out I always ask their thoughts on the menu before I make my final decision, just to see if there's any 'must haves'. The first thing I noticed was that every-

one was incredibly passionate about the food. Not just the staff, but the diners either side of us. To start, we ordered one Goi cuon and one brisket summer roll. Forget deep fried, dry and heavy and think light, healthy and delicious.

Plentiful

But the Vietnamese chicken salad (Goi ga) was the star of the show. It was simply a delight from the first mouthful to the last. Suffice to say my wife's trip to the bathroom resulted in her only having two mouthfuls left when she returned.

The shredded white chicken strips were juicy and plentiful and combined meticulously with Asian herbs and peppers before the addition of a chilli ginger dressing that brought out every single flavour of the dish.

I do like to change things up in restaurants, however with Pho, I always pick the

same thing every single time – Pho chin (brisket) with extra brisket.

The huge bowl in which it was served may be slightly intimidating to the novice, but with the oversized wooden spoon that comes with the soup, they avoid that awkward 'Should I be using chopsticks?' question.

With lean meat aplenty and rice noodles flowing, the dish provides the perfect comfort food combination, but at the same time keeping the healthy-eating element at the forefront of the dish.

Suffice to say we could not manage dessert, but there were a variety of different traditional dishes that looked stunning as they came off the pass.

Excellent service, delicious, healthy plentiful food in a relaxed friendly atmosphere. Pho ticks all the boxes – this really is on the right track.

## Way of the Warrior: Epic Movies & Armour

**23 July - 4 September**

A stunning exhibition of props and costumes from epics such as Troy, Hercules, King Arthur and more. A highlight will be Oscar winning costumes from Gladiator.

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## Newly refurbished well-presented three-bed home should be viewed

Situated in a popular area, 2 Parkes Hall Road, Woodsetton, Dudley is newly refurbished and well presented including a new kitchen/diner and bathroom.

It is for sale through Trinity Property at £175,000.

A property that really needs to be viewed in order to be fully appreciated, it has central heating and double glazing, with a front drive way for off road parking.

Its accommodation briefly comprises an entrance porch, leading to an entrance hall with stairs off to the first floor.

There are also doors off to a spacious lounge, a brand new fitted kitchen/diner with a utility room off having access to the side of the property and driveway.

Off the first floor landing are three bedrooms (two doubles and one single) and a brand new fitted bathroom/WC.

The new suite includes a P-shaped bath with a shower over. The pleasant rear garden has a gravel and slab patio area and further lawned area. This property is finished to a high standard throughout.

### Aspects

There is also a separate building plot next door for a further detached property with construction beginning presently.

Trinity Property bring a fresh, friendly and honest approach to selling, buying and letting property within the Dudley and Stourbridge area.

Offering free market appraisals, great EPC prices, all aspects of property letting and management, they are based in central Dudley and cover Kingswinford, Wordsley, Netherton, Sedgley, Tipton and Tividale and more, with a business built on recommendation.

With many years of experience to bring to the table, you can expect great service at the right price.

A spokesman for the selling agent said: "We can offer you internet marketing on Rightmove, OnTheMarket, TrinityProperty.net and others, as well as local and regional marketing in the Express & Star, Chronicles and local newspapers, along with our eye-catching cerise

## KEY FEATURES

Popular area

Refurbished

Well presented

New kitchen/diner

New bathroom

DUDLEY £175,000





## Three-bed semi for sale with no chain

DUDLEY

£169,950

For sale with no chain, this three-bedroomed semi-detached house in Corser Street, Dudley, has an asking price via Trinity Property of £169,950.

Including a large lounge, a driveway and a rear garden with a patio and lawn, it briefly comprises a large lounge and fitted kitchen with a separate dining area, three good sized double bedrooms and a house bathroom, with a separate WC. The rear outside has a patio area, lawn and brick built shed.

For further information contact Trinity Property on 01384 213395 or visit [www.trinityproperty.net](http://www.trinityproperty.net)



## End terrace ideal choice for first timers or buy to let

DUDLEY

£119,950

<<<

A three bedroomed end terrace property in Walker Street, Dudley, has been put on the market.

The property is on sale for £119,950 with Walton and Hipkiss.

Being ideal for both first time buyers and as a buy to let, this property offers both spacious and versatile accommodation. Comprising two reception rooms, kitchen with breakfast area off, downstairs bathroom and three good size bedrooms, this home will appeal on the open market to those wanting to be close to amenities and transport links.

For more information about the property contact Walton & Hipkiss on 01384 392371 or visit [waltonandhipkiss.co.uk](http://waltonandhipkiss.co.uk)



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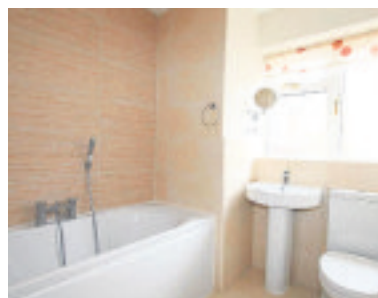
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## Smart bungalow with a superb patio terrace

A smartly presented semi-detached bungalow with a superb south facing patio terrace to the rear, in Muskoka, Bewdley, also has an open aspect beyond it.

It is for sale through Allan Morris at £199,950 with no chain. It has two bedrooms (the master having fitted furniture), a lounge with a feature fireplace, a reception hall with a cloaks cupboard, a re-fitted

BEWDLEY

£199,950

bathroom, a kitchen with an integrated hob and oven, a utility room, rear conservatory, double glazing and gas central heating.

The gardens are a particularly

attractive feature of the property with full width block paved patio terrace having steps down to two lower terraces with gravelled landscaping and garden shed. A gated pathway gives front to rear access to the side of the property. The gardens enjoy a very private and sunny aspect.

For further information contact Allan Morris on 01562 747755 or visit [www.allan-morris.co.uk](http://www.allan-morris.co.uk)



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## Kia celebrates 25 years in UK

From white wall tyres and £1 deposits to an industry leading seven year warranty and numerous design awards, Kia Motors (UK) Ltd is celebrating 25 years in the UK. The brand first started trading here in 1991, selling just under 1,800 cars in the UK in that year – a figure that it now sells on average every two weeks across its 188 strong dealer network.

Starting with just one model on sale in 1991 – the Kia Pride – the Kia range now covers nine segments with 12 cars on offer and with three engine types available in the UK – petrol, diesel and electric – this is soon to be expanded with the all-new petrol hybrid Niro going on sale in August.

With UK sales totalling 763,500 from 1991 to today, 44 per cent of the total has been in the last five years, highlighting the dramatic growth that the

brand has seen in recent years. Consumers have been attracted to the brand for its styling, quality and reliability as well as that industry-topping seven year warranty.

Commenting on Kia's 25th UK anniversary, Paul Philpott, president and CEO, Kia Motors (UK) Ltd, said: "Kia has been on quite a journey in recent years. Within Kia's time in the UK we have grown from a relatively small importer to challenging the best and most established brands in the industry."

"We have a fantastic, ever growing, range of cars and in 2016 and 2017 we will launch fourteen new and face-lifted cars. Kia are certainly not resting on its laurels for the next 25 years as we expand our sales and dealer network in the UK."

The Picanto – Pride's replacement – was the first car in the A-segment to offer a five-door model, launching a successful and quirky animated advert

asking consumers to 'Think about it', something that consumers have taken to heart – the Picanto is the biggest selling Kia in the UK since its introduction in 2004 with over 156,000 sold.

The Sportage, now in its fourth generation, has sold close to 140,000 and is Kia's second best-selling model with 16,000 of those being sold since the new model launch in February.

Although it has been in the UK for just 25 years Kia is still a company of firsts – from the five-door Picanto, through to dancing hamsters advertising for the Soul as well as the first manufacturer to utilise the independent review company Reevoo so that customers can give unedited, uncensored feedback about its models and its dealerships – with over 20,000 reviews, 97 per cent of customers would choose Kia again.

Kia Motors Corporation is considerably older than its UK subsidiary being established in 1944.



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<b>13/13 Fiat Scudo 2.0 Multijet Diesel 130 Panorama Family L2</b> 5dr 8 Seater, 46k, Beige, Alloys, Climate Control, CD, E/Windows <b>£10995 / £58 Per Week</b>	<b>07/57 Mini Cooper 1.6 Cooper Sidewalk</b> 2dr Convertible, 63k, Silver, Alloys, Tan Leather, Air Con, CD, E/Windows <b>£5995 / £31 Per Week</b>
<b>08/57 Audi TT 2.0 TFSI 2dr S Tronic</b> Convertible Automatic, 55k, Red Metallic, Alloys, Grey Leather, CD, E/Windows <b>£10495 / £56 Per Week</b>	<b>10/10 Skoda Fabia 1.9 TDI Sport</b> 60k, Mauve with White Roof, Alloys, Air Con, CD, E/Windows <b>£5495 / £28 Per Week</b>
<b>07/57 Mercedes SLK 200K 1.8</b> 2dr Tip Hard-top Convertible Automatic, 56k, Blue, Alloys, Cream Leather, Heated seats, CD, E/Windows <b>£9495 / £50 Per Week</b>	<b>10/10 Renault Twingo 1.6 VVT RS Gordini 133</b> 3dr, ONLY 28k MILES, Blue with White Stripes, Number 114 of only 200 made, Alloys, Black Leather, CD, E/Windows <b>£4995 / £26 Per Week</b>
<b>09/09 Mazda MX-5 1.8i Roadster Coupe Convertible</b> [Option Pack] 2dr, 22k Miles, Silver, Alloys, Black Leather, Heated Seats, E/Windows <b>£8995 / £47 Per Week</b>	<b>07/07 Volkswagen Touran 1.6 S</b> 5dr 7 Seater MPV, 70k, Black, Alloys, Air Con, CD, Electric Windows <b>£4995 / £26 Per Week</b>
<b>09/09 Audi A4 2.0 TDI Diesel 143 SE</b> 5dr Multitronic Auto Estate, 88k, Black, Alloys, Digital Air Con, CD, E/Windows <b>£8495 / £47 Per Week</b>	<b>09/58 Vauxhall Corsa 1.4i 16V Design</b> 5dr Automatic, 45k, Blue Metallic, Alloys, Air-Con, CD, E/Windows <b>£4995 / £26 Per Week</b>
<b>09/59 Mercedes C250 Blue-Efficiency 2.2 CDI Diesel Elegance</b> 84k, Grey, Black Leather, Alloys, CD, E/Windows <b>£8495 / £47 Per Week</b>	<b>08/58 Citroen Berlingo Multispace 1.6i 16VTR</b> 5dr MPV, 49k miles, Beige, E/Windows, CD, Sliding Side Doors <b>£4995 / £26 Per Week</b>
<b>05/55 BMW 730 SE 3.0 Diesel</b> 4dr Automatic, 70k, Grey Metallic, Alloy Wheels, Black Leather, Sat Nav, Air Con, CD, E/Windows <b>£7995 / £42 Per Week</b>	<b>09/59 Suzuki SX4 1.5 GL</b> 5dr, 59k, Grey Metallic, Air Con, CD Player, Electric Windows <b>£3995 / £22 Per Week</b>
<b>06/56 Toyota Rav4 XT4 D-4D 2.2 Diesel 4WD</b> 5dr, 75k, Silver, Alloys, Air Con, CD, E/Windows, E/Sunroof <b>£6495 / £33 Per Week</b>	<b>08/58 Fiat Bravo 1.9 Multijet Diesel Dynamic</b> 5dr, 61k, Blue, Alloys, CD, Air-Con, E/Windows <b>£3495 / £18 Per Week</b>

Finance example: 2009 Vauxhall Corsa Automatic. Cash Price £4995, Deposit £300, Amount of credit £4695, Fixed interest rate 6.25% Flat rate, 11.8% Apr, 60 monthly Payments of £110.53 (£25.50 per week) Total amount payable £4991.04 (Includes Document fee and Completion fee, Subject to status)

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Personal contract hire offer on Astra SRI Sports Tourer 1.0i 105PS Turbo S/5 ecoFLEX in Lava Red and Astra SRI Hatchback 1.4i 150PS Turbo in Lava Red on orders received before 30 September 2016, subject to availability and status. Age 18+ only. Figures for Astra SRI Sports Tourer based on a non-maintenance contract hire package with advance rental of £2,580, then 47 monthly rentals of £215. Figures for Astra SRI Hatchback based on a non-maintenance contract hire package with advance rental of £2,587, then 47 monthly rentals of £199. Excess miles over contracted mileage of 32,000 over 48 months will be charged at a maximum of 10.46 pence per mile. Excess charges also apply if you breach manufacturer servicing or maintenance guidelines or if the car exceeds BVRLA Fair Wear & Tear guidelines for its age/mileage when it is returned to Vauxhall Leasing. Package includes Road Fund Licence and Vauxhall Assistance. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. Prices and details are subject to change without notice. For full specification and T&Cs contact your local Retailer. **You will not own the car.** ALD Automotive Ltd., trading as Vauxhall Leasing, B516 3JA. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. #Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors. \*OnStar and 4G Wi-Fi hotspot services require activation and are subject to mobile network coverage and availability. Wi-Fi hotspot service requires account with nominated mobile network operator. 4G subject to mobile network coverage availability. Charges apply after free trial period. Check www.vauxhall.co.uk/onstar for details of availability, coverage and charges or ask your Vauxhall Retailer. Terms and conditions apply. Vehicles purchased without OnStar cannot have the required technology retro fitted. This feature is not available for ADAM, Corsa and Viva. An embedded Vauxhall navigation unit and map data are requirements for this service. Correct at time of going to press.

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## DRIVETIME



## Suzuki is 'most improved'

Suzuki GB is delighted to announce that it has been recognised as the 'most improved organisation' in The Institute of Customer Service's annual UK Customer Satisfaction Index (UKCSI) for July 2016.

A national measure of sentiment across the country, the research asks over 10,000 consumers to rate their experiences of dealing with more than 200 different companies across 13 sectors, including brands in the motoring industry.

Compared to the same study in July 2015, Suzuki has since added 9.1 points to give a score of 82.4, which saw the carmaker climb to 27th place overall.

The year-on-year increase in the number of points was greater than any other of the 226 companies classified, and the biggest improvement out of all of the 24 car manufacturers that took part in the study. During the same period, the automotive sector equally saw a 0.6 point-rise in customer satisfaction.

The significant jump in the latest ranking has been assisted by the launch of the nationwide Suzuki Service Promise initiative last summer.

It is designed to ensure that vehicle owners receive a consistently high standard of care across its entire network of Service dealers when they take the car for routine servicing or repair.

Denis Houston, aftersales director at Suzuki GB PLC, said: "We are delighted with the results shown in the Customer Satisfaction Index and this clearly reflects our ongoing investment and the great lengths that Suzuki goes to in order to ensure that every motorist receives the very highest level of service."

"We are extremely pleased that the effort of our dealer network has paid off, and we will continue to strive for even better scores in 2017."

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			£1,162.43	3.56% 6.9%

Images for illustration purposes only

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**8**

**Motoring**

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**CHEVROLET TACUMA** 2006, 1.6 SX, blue, 51,000 miles, MoT, June 2017, £995, 01902 566552 or 07938 974075.

**FORD FIESTA 1.2** 2001, MoT, FSH, 60k, red, alloys, excellent condition £450. 07514 711600.

**FORD KA** 2002, 51,000 miles, black, MoT Jan 2017, good condition for year. £500 ono. 07968 609118 / 01902 786216.

**FORD KA** 2005, 50,000 Miles, 1.3, Silver, long MoT, CD. Some scratches on bodywork, engine fine, 3dr£450 075019454768

**FORD STREET KA** Luxury 1.6, 2004, silver, long MoT, new parts, good condition, £900 ono, 01384 258713.

**HONDA CIVIC EXEC** 2002, 118,160 miles, 1600cc auto, silver, abs, pas, sunroof, alloys, CD, leather interior, MoT. £500 ono. 0121 5598610.

**HYUNDAI ACCENT**, 2002, silver, 108,000 miles, Petrol, 6 months MoT, Good runner, £395. o.n.o 07813 162522.

**NISSAN ALMERA** 53 plate, 1500cc, good condition, MoT, very good runner, no faults £499 ono. 07827 059501 / 01902 659043.

**NISSAN MICRA** 1.0 2003 reg, 77,000 miles, 12 months MoT, very economical, good condition. £800. 01902 405757.

**NISSAN MICRA 1.3** 1999, silver, dual control, automatic, no MoT. £375 ono.

**BMW 528i MSPORT** Silver, X reg, damaged off side front wing. Automatic, short MoT. £600 ono.

**07837 362124/07951 714174.**

**NISSAN MICRA** 1998, 5Dr, 60,000 miles, 11 months MoT, red, fsh, £395. 07953 339533.

**PEUGEOT 206 1.4LX** 2003, automatic, 12 mths MoT, silver, 41,000 miles, careful lady owner, beautiful condition. £1,300. 01384 823449.

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**MITSUBISHI CANTA** 7%, Tonne, 07, 200,000 k, very clean and tidy, flat bed, Tyres good, ready to work. MoT April 17, £4,250 - £4,171. 07850 733370 or 07710 343433.

**VAUXHALL COMBO** van, 1700 diesel, 06 reg, 12 months MoT, 56,000 miles, £2,200. 07828 111032.

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**WORX** 125, October 2013, white, only 273 miles, mature owner, as new, immaculate, £1,100 ono. 01384 480354 or 07773 125807.

**YAMAHA DT125R** Y reg, 11 months MoT, good for age, various upgrades, mature owner, £1,145 ono. Call after 5pm 07914 903631.

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**ROVER** 45 1600, 04 reg, Facelift model, MoT, silver, £700 ono. 07519 603982.

**SEAT IBIZA** 53 plate, silver, 40,000 miles, FSH, MoT Feb 2017, one owner from new, £1,250. 07956 688552.

**SKODA OCTAVIA 1.6** 2003, 117,000 miles, grey, abs, airbag, MoT until Sept 2016, central locking, pas, alloys, stereo. Recent timing belt and water pump.

**£300 ono.**

**07967 311845.**

**TOYOTA MR2 CONVERTIBLE** Roadster, 2001, 101,188 miles, MoT July 2017, £1,250. Telephone 07736 628908.

**TOYOTA YARIS** 1000cc, 2005, 3dr, 66,000 miles, 11 months MoT, FSH, A/C, E/W, PAS, rear roof spoiler, £1,100. 0777 5744154.

**TOYOTA YARIS** 1000cc, 2005, 3dr, 66,000 miles, 9 months MoT, FSH, A/C, E/W, PAS, rear roof spoiler. £1,399. 0777 5744154.

**VAUXHALL CORSA** 1.0 Life, 2004, new MoT, 75k miles, history, very clean, £695. 07950 398750.

**VAUXHALL CORSA** 1200cc, 05 plate, black, MoT February, very good condition, £700. 01384 251328 / 07972 169554.

**VAUXHALL CORSA 1.3CDTi** Design, 2004, 5 door, silver, electric windows, mirrors, long MoT, central locking, CD, £895. 07973 614937.

**VAUXHALL CORSA** 2004, 1.2 petrol, full MoT, silver, 5Dr, 100,000 miles, FSH, E/W, PAS, CD player, £1,095. 07504 305018.

**VAUXHALL ZAFIRA** 2002, 2.0 TDi, electric sunroof, towbar, MoT March 17, £350 ono. 07398 084932.

**audi 80 CABRIOLET** 2000, 74,000 miles, kingfisher blue, abs, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, alarm, long MoT, full leather interior.

**£2,100 ono.**

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**FORD FIESTA**, 12 plate, 1.2 petrol, silver, 12 months MoT, e/w, pas. Great condition and very economical. £1,095 ono. 07754 557861.

**FORD KA** Style, 2008, 65,000 miles, 1 previous owner, E/W, AC, EM, burnt orange colour, excellent £1,695 ono. 07799 420194.

**MAZDA MX 5 1.8i** 2002 Green, ABS, electric windows, mirrors, Alarm. Full MoT. Metallic paint. C/L, PAS, CD, leather interior. Removable hard top. Good condition.

**£1,995. o.n.o.**

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**MERCEDES A180** 1991 Avant-garde, 2005 diesel, 192,000, black, MoT July 17, service history, clean, £1,600. 07957 016715.

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**£3,900 ono.**

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**SEAT IBIZA 1.4** Diesel, 58k, 2010, Good condition. 0 Road Tax. 8 mths MoT. 1 lady driver from new. 60-70 mpg. Red. £3,950. 01902 895145.

**SUZUKI GRANDE VITARA 2.0** 2004, 4dr, petrol, silver, alloys, long MoT, 2 or 4wd, some history, great car, inspection. **£1,995 ono**

**07887 765905 / 01922 473092.**

**TOYOTA AYGO** 2008, 12,700 miles only, silver, suede/leather seats, alloys, remote central locking, a/c, MoT till March 2017.

**£2,850 ono**

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**VAUXHALL CORSA LIFE** 1.0 07 reg, red, 69k very low mileage, fantastic 1st car, had regular service. £2,500 ono. 07982 628676.

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Molly Wright, aged 11, and Sophie Edwards, 12, both of Burntwood



Morgan Daley, aged nine, from St Stephen's Primary



Leah Everitt, aged nine, of Bilston, takes part in the Tri-Golf regional final



St Stephen's Primary's Alecia James and Endrit Tora, both aged nine

# Success for 3 Hammers is par for the course

**THE 3 HAMMERS Golf Complex academy director Rob Bluck is in high spirits after two successful events at the course.**

The second national Street Golf Championship and the Wolverhampton Tri-Golf final were both held at the par-three venue on Old Stafford Road, Coven, with youngsters of all abilities getting involved.

First to take place was the Street Golf, with teams from community golf programmes across 16 Premier League and Championship football clubs, including Villa and Stoke, bearing their teams' strips and competing for the crown.

The competition was organised by the Golf Foundation, in partnership with Premier League 4 Sport, Sport England and Get into Golf.

## Adapted

The final was aimed at junior competitors, with teams of four playing adapted formats of golf such as 'Super Sixes' and 'Flag Golf' in the morning and afternoon.

Cardiff City, who won the inaugural trophy in 2015, were victorious once again and the youngsters who took part were also treated to a trick shot display by Kevin Carpenter on the driving range.

"We held the grand final for the second year running and it was a fantastic event," said Bluck. "Fortunately, the rain managed to hold off throughout the day."

"We were initially supposed to start at 10am but we

## SPORTING FEATURE

By Joe Edwards

**"A young girl called Georgia Smith, from Oxfordshire, managed to get a hole in one in front of the Sky cameras."**

had to put it back for half an hour. But after that it all ran smoothly until we finished at 4pm, and then the rain started pouring down.

"A young girl called Georgia Smith, from Oxfordshire, managed to get a hole in one in front of the Sky cameras, as they were down here as well, so that tuned out really well.

"Kevin Carpenter did a trick shot show, which was awesome and everyone really enjoyed it.

"All in all, it was a massive success."

On the following day, 60 young golfers from schools across the Black Country descended on the 3 Hammers course for the Tri-Golf final.

Involved were six primary schools – St Stephen's, Claregate, St Andrew's, St Michael's, The Royal and Stow Heath – with each having won a qualifying event to get to the final.

From each school there were 10 children – five boys, five girls – aged six-to-nine taking part in a se-

ries of challenges on the complex's 10,000 sq ft artificial practice and putting area. Playing with soft clubs and balls, they competed to win certificates, medals and trophies but before that, were given time to practice with some PGA golf professionals.

St Stephen's Church of England Primary School were the winners and will soon head to the Staffordshire School Games county final.

Bluck was equally as thrilled with how the event went, and said: "We had 60 kids here from all across Wolverhampton."

"It was kids who have given golf a go in their schools so it was nice to have them down here and experience playing on the course."

## Weather

"It was St Stephen's who won it, the weather tried its best to ruin it again but it all went well. Tri-Golf festivals are played with a soft club and ball but being as they were down here, we got them on the driving range with a proper club and ball and they enjoyed it."

"We have got a number of kids now who have shown an interest in carrying on with golf and coming along to our sessions down here as well."

The 3 Hammers Golf Complex recently won the Golf Foundation's national Critchley Community Award for getting juniors into the sport.

Bluck believes the Street Golf and the Tri-Golf events were a great way to top off a fantastic few months for 3 Hammers.

"We have just won the award for our work with juniors so these events summed up what we are all about. It was the icing on the cake," he added.

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## Morris looks to hammer race rivals

CRADLEY rider Ashley Morris was set to start as one of the favourites for Tuesday's showpiece Golden Hammer individual event at Monmore.

Morris has won every major honour with the Heathens and made an emotional return to the club for the 2016 season.

But on an individual front the Hammer has so far eluded him and it's something he was aiming to put right in front of a bumper crowd at the 20-heat event.

Morris said: "It's come around really quickly, but I'm really looking forward to it because it's always a massive meeting."

"You know you'll get a big crowd which makes it special and there are some top riders involved as well."

"It's going to be a tough one with the riders who are racing, but I've been going well at Monmore this season."

"I know the track well enough, I can't have any excuses and I'll be trying to show everyone what I can do against strong opposition."

"I've always seemed to have a chance but things never seem to go my way on the night. Hopefully this time things can be different and I can go all the way."

He admits a return to the Heathens has worked out well after two seasons away from the club.

"I'm enjoying being back this year," Morris said. "I've always been welcomed really well by everyone at Cradley, so I'm grateful for that and I still enjoy riding here."

"I've had some great seasons at Cradley, and I've come on a lot as a rider since I first started here."

"It's great to think I've been involved in winning trophies with the club and having as much success as we have from where it all started. I'll always enjoy wearing a Heathens race jacket."

## Hotshot Cooper hits 14 goals as team strolls into final

HOTSHOT John Cooper scored 14 goals as his team strolled to the final of a walking football tournament.

Despite his achievements, the Dudley-based Hartshill Strollers striker finished on the losing side in the final.

Cooper scored four hat-tricks in three matches at the Smiths News Walking Football Tournament at Harvey Hadden Sports Village, Nottingham – including five in one game.

However, Hartshill finished runners-up in the over 60s competition, beaten 3-1 by Leggy Mambos, the national walking football champions, from Barmsey.

It came after Hartshill Strollers won an FA-organised tournament at Hereford. The victory was made extra sweet as the club's B team – all but one in the over 60s squad – defeated the club's A team – all of them 50 plus.

It was the second tournament win for Hartshill Strollers in just over a month as the A team won the Kidderminster Harriers Community Walking Football Tournament in May, with the B team finishing third.

## Chernobyl children net ace tennis day



Visitors enjoy the fun day at the tennis club

CHERNOBYL children enjoyed an ace day as they visited Wollaston Lawn Tennis Club's annual fun day.

Ann Becke, who has been bringing children from the disaster area for more than 20 years, and her host families brought the children to the club in Prestwood Drive, in Stourton.

After receiving club T-shirts, sponsored by club members, the children enjoyed fun and games on court including a game of football against club members and the host dads.

Following a barbecue, ice cream and cakes, the fun continued including a table tennis/ten-

### Tennis

nis match with Wollaston club tennis champion Adam Tranter taking on 12-year-old Lisa, age group table tennis champion of Belarus and hoping to compete in European championship.

The combined "challenge" ended in an honourable draw. The day finished with the children sorting through all the item of clothing, stationery, games, toiletries and first aid to take back with them to Belarus.

Club Chairman John Cutler said: "We all enjoyed giving these children a day to remember."

# KARATE RIVALS GET THE CHOP

## DUDLEY Shukokai Karate Club sensei Mandie Read is elated after a big medal haul on the world stage.

Read, from Kingswinford, has been a teacher in the martial art for 30 years and took a 30-strong squad to the WUKF World Karate Championships in Dublin.

Representing the All Styles Karate Alliance GB, which Read helped set up 12 months ago, it was made up of competitors from Dudley Shukokai, based at Thorns Community College in Brierley Hill, Nine Locks Shukokai, also in the town, and four other clubs around the country.

Dudley Shukokai came away with 11 medals – three gold, four silver and three bronze.

"We now have six world champions as two of the gold medals were in team events," said Read. "Our team ranged from 10 years old right up to myself as a veteran. There was over 2,500 competitors in total in Dublin and my squad had been training for a year, after getting seven medals at the Europeans last year."

### Silver

"I couldn't have asked for any better from the squad, especially considering the majority of them are under 18."

Read and her son Daniel, 27, and also an instructor, were both among the medals.

Overall, the alliance finished 17th on the medal table out of 71 federations at the competition in Ireland.

Read teaches every day of the week, bar the odd Thursday off, and does her best to visit all of the clubs under the All Styles Karate Alliance GB banner. Her main body of work is at Dudley Shukokai, which has been going for the last 25 years. There are 100 on the books as well as 50 in the All Star squad.

"We created All Star 12 months ago, it goes from strength to strength, and are promoting all of the time to get people in," said Read.

"We have got six clubs with over 600 members in total and Dudley Shukokai is probably one of the most successful clubs in the West Midlands."

For more information or to get involved, visit [www.dudleyshukokai.co.uk](http://www.dudleyshukokai.co.uk)



Mandie Read, Sam Cooper, Farren Brown, Ben Young and Charlie Aston show off their silver-

## Bird wings in with Forest opportunity

YOUNG goalkeeper Brandon Bird has signed for Nottingham Forest for the forthcoming Junior Premier League season.

The 10-year-old shot-stopper from Dudley has played for West Bromwich United in the Walsall League for over a year, and has spent time with the Albion and Kidderminster Harriers academies as well as Forest.

Committed to achieving his dream of playing professionally in the future, Brandon trains six days-a-week and regularly posts videos of himself doing drills on his Facebook page.

Brandon, who turns 11 in January, is only in his second year of playing football, and won three awards at West Bromwich United last season

– Most Improved, Most Man of the Matches and Coaches' Player of the Season.

Father Martin said: "With Forest, the Junior Premier League is obviously a completely different level to grassroots so it will be a big test for him."

"He seems to be stronger and better as he goes on and he is learning all the time."

## Zaber: Let's get it on with Byfield

MANNY Zaber has revealed he's set his sights on a Black Country derby showdown in the ring with Dudley's Les Byfield.

Old Hill's Zaber is undefeated in seven professional contests, since turning over from unlicensed boxing last year.

Byfield is also undefeated having trodden a similar path and has joined him in the paid ranks at lightweight.

The pair were on a collision course during their time in the unlicensed game, before Zaber injured himself in a car accident.

Now the 21-year-old is eager to rekindle the rivalry, saying: "I want Les Byfield. Wherever I go, people keep asking me about the fight."

"We're both local fighters with similar backgrounds and records and I want to get it on."

"I know Les and respect him as a fighter, but I want to get in the ring and prove that I'm the better man."

"We were due to fight a few years ago when we both boxed unlicensed, but I broke my leg in a car accident and it just never happened."

"We are at similar stages in our pro career now, though, and it's a great idea for us both."

Zaber recorded a seventh straight win in Tewksbury, outpointing Gloucester journeyman Andy Harris. 'Pac Man' is set to fight again in September, as he looks to keep himself busy and ready for a possible showdown with Byfield.

Zaber said: "It was a good work out against Andy. He's an experienced pro and knows all the tricks in the book."

"I was pleased to get the rounds in."

"I'm back in the gym and should be fighting early September in Walsall. After that, I plan to keep busy so my message to Les is 'I'm ready when you are'."

## First half strikes seal Harriers win

HALESOWEN 0 Kidderminster Harriers 2  
HALESOWEN'S first home friendly was decided by two first-half goals in favour of the National League North outfit.

Prior to kick-off a minute's silence was observed in memory of long-time supporter Jack Hale, who passed away earlier in the week, aged 90.

The visitors took the lead after 21 minutes as Kidderminster's trialist centre forward curled beyond home goalkeeper Jake King.

The lead was doubled just eight minutes later when a ball across the penalty area from the left was turned past his own goalkeeper by Callum Williams.

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